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The Week

DISREGARDING labels and formalities, looking only at the substance, the great news is that the Peace Conference is reconvening to reconsider and revise and restore. The French are beginning to negotiate peace with Germany, the Allies are in the act of negotiating a peace in Eastern Europe. Call it by whatever name you choose in order to make the fact more palatable, the fact is that the big decisions of Versailles—the Carthaginian peace for Germany and the Holy Alliance against Russia are both abandoned. Argument has not accomplished this result. It has merely illuminated it. What has brought Europe to the verge of a new peace conference is the inexorable march of events set in motion by the Big Four at Paris. For one year the will of man has been helpless to control. For the decisions reached at Paris were a doom that had to unfold itself. The Treaty condemned France to disillusionment, signed the death warrant of the moderate German government, obstructed the restoration of industry, promised famine and plague to Central Europe, instigated the newer states like Poland to suicidal adventure. These things were written into the Treaty. They have followed swiftly and relentlessly, and the existing stock of intelligence and good will were powerless to avert them. Now that they have happened, now that Europe has learned from bitter experience what it would not learn from reason, the real business of making peace can begin. The will and thought of man are again in action.

THREE large steps towards peace have been taken. The first is the acceptance by the French of the principle that it is possible to negotiate with Germany and that Germany belongs to the family of nations. That is the meaning of Spa. Nothing final may be decided at Spa except that future decisions are to be made not by futile ultimatum but by direct conference. The second great step is the agreement for a peace conference with Russia. Those words may sound strange. For sensitive people there is a euphemism. There is to be a "peace contract" with the Soviets. Actually a peace contract is a peace treaty, and the "Soviets" are "Russia." M. Krassin left London, not because the trade conferences had failed, but because a peace conference was necessary. The third great step is the military collapse of the Polish offensive, and the ruin of the whole French policy in the East. Kornilov, Kolchak, Yudenitch, Mueller, Kaledin, and now Pilsudski!

IN order to extricate the Poles from the frightful mess into which they were pushed by their foolish friends, they will probably need the assistance of all the Allies. That assistance will be given, and in giving it the statesmen of Europe have their first great opportunity since Versailles to construct a lasting peace. At the forthcoming peace conference between Russia and Britain, Poland and France will obviously have to participate. At that conference the whole Russian business can and should be liquidated for all time. Reasonable ethnic frontiers for Poland, a general demobilization, the removal of economic barriers, guarantees for minorities, a

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decent adjustment of the debt and reciprocal guarantees that the Allies will cease to attack Russia while Russia abstains from all propaganda affecting their internal affairs—these are the cardinal points of a peace in Eastern Europe.

RUSSIA will, of course, enter the conference as a victor in a righteous war. This is not simply our judgment alone. Mr. Asquith described that war as follows:

> Poland had deliberately and wantonly gone beyond the boundaries assigned by the Treaty.

The statement is not altogether accurate in that the eastern boundary of Poland was not embodied in a treaty. It was "recommended" by the Supreme Council, but that for all practical purposes amounts to the same thing. Poland "deliberately and wantonly" went beyond this boundary, and the Polish people are faced with military invasion as a result of the aggression. What sort of behavior may the civilized world expect of Russia, if she should shortly be in a position to dictate peace to Poland?

THE world will demand something a great deal better than a Brest-Litovsk or a Versailles. Granting that Russia, like France, is morally entitled to "punish" her aggressive neighbor, to exact "guarantees" and secure reparation, the world will expect Russia to take a larger view of the matter. It will expect Russia to recognize the innocence and helplessness of the Polish people, their right to independence, their claim to decent national frontiers. It will expect Russia to seek a peace of reconciliation. For the character of that peace will be the acid test of whether Russia today is militarized by the success of the Red armies.

A GOOD peace between Poland and Russia will mean peace between Russia and Europe. This is the most urgent matter in the whole wide world. Once it is attained, the German problem will look differently. For peace in Eastern Europe, presupposing as it does a chastened and democratic Poland, destroys the structure of French Foreign Office imperialism. The policy of eternal war by means of Poland against Germany and Russia disappears, and what can take its place? Nothing but a policy of reconciliation between France and Germany. Once that is accepted sincerely, a reasonable reparation account can be opened, and when that account is reasonable and tolerable, the questions of disarmament, revenge, occupation will become infinitely easier. A German government bound by terms that are possible will need less troops to maintain itself. The less troops there are, the less France has to fear. All this is possible today. We challenge any one to deny that it is the path of hope for mankind. We do not assert that it will happen, for the world is still infested with gigantic lying and colossal intrigue. We simply assert that it can happen within a reasonable time, and that it ought to happen.

FROM the present Administration, with the State Department what it is, no assistance is to be expected. It is still, as the announcement of "trade with Russia" shows, as tricky as ever. What can be expected from the candidates? Senator Harding is committed by his platform and by his interview with Mr. Bruce Bliven to genuine trade with Russia. On all other questions in Europe nothing is known of his views. From Governor Cox comes an interesting statement, important if true. The New York Times in a special dispatch from Dayton asserts that he will propose two reservations; one that the United States can act only in accordance with the Constitution, the other as follows:

> That the United States signs with the agreement and understanding that all the signatories are bound together for only one reason—to keep the peace of the world.

This in our opinion is the best reservation ever proposed, if Governor Cox means by it completely to remove all obligations to enforce the Treaty, to preserve the valuable consultative machinery of the Covenant, and yet to leave the United States free to decide on its merits whether any particular proposal is for peace or imperialism. The obligation would then cease to be that of preserving the status quo; it would be transformed into due notice that the United States will grasp at opportunities to preserve the peace. Between peace and the status quo there is a whole world of difference. If Governor Cox will elucidate that difference he will have untangled the Treaty snarl.

THE courageous and hopeful men and women gathered in Chicago are like a group of prospectors drilling for oil. They may not find the exact spot this time, but they are making an experiment which had to be made whatever the immediate outcome. They are not bent, as we understand it, on creating a "third party." They are bent in the long run on a realignment of the two parties. That realignment will come in our time. And it will come in part by just such a push from the outside, as the people in Chicago contemplate. It will come by the action of determined and convinced leaders of social groups that are stifled by the existing alignment. But they will succeed only when a genuine campaign of education has prepared the way. That campaign has not been made. The energies of

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liberals have been consumed since the war, not in constructive suggestion, but in a desperate, and, we now believe, successful stand against impudent reaction exploiting weariness and hysteria. The convention in Chicago, whatever else it does or fails to do, is the first coherent effort to organize American liberalism. Next week we shall publish a full account of the gathering.

IN 1919 the Amalgamated Clothing Workers succeeded in making contracts with the clothing manufacturers of Rochester with the single notable exception of the Michaels Stern Co., which refused to recognize the Union. To secure its position the Union called a strike in the Michaels Stern factories. The company obtained a temporary injunction against this strike on the ground of violence, and this injunction has recently been made permanent in a decision handed down by Judge Rodenbeck.

AS an incident in the struggle of the Amalgamated to strengthen its position in Rochester the decision is of major importance. As a step forward in the labor law of the State of New York the decision is practically without value. The case is made to turn upon "the question as to whether or not force, or what is equivalent to force, was employed by the defendants" to secure recognition. As a result the opinion deals almost exclusively with the facts of the particular case, and the conclusion is simply a determination of fact, a determination which seems scarcely substantiated by the evidence quoted. The Court finds that an illegal use of force was intended by the defendant Union as a means to the realization of its object. Discussion of the validity of the object is avoided.

THE significance of the decision lies in the problem avoided rather than in the problem faced. To establish the right to strike for unionization counsel for the defendants offered a mass of evidence based upon a detailed study of the actual operation of the union system in the clothing industry, and intended to show that the interests secured by organizations of employees in general, and the interests ultimately sought by the Amalgamated in its Rochester strike are interests such as the law recognizes. This entire question of the legal position of the union has long been a vexed point in American labor law. Heretofore justification of the strike to unionize has been found or denied upon the scantiest evidence or upon the personal bias of the court. The attorneys for the defendants, looking beyond the Rochester case to the whole legal problem of organized labor, attempted to set the legality of the union beyond all possible question by scientific proof of the economic necessity and beneficial operation of organization of employees. It is regrettable so far as the growth of the law is concerned that Judge Rodenbeck found it necessary to exclude this evidence upon the ground that "lawful purposes" would be assumed until attacked. As a matter of law the assumption was undoubtedly proper. As a method of handling such problems as those involved in the relation of labor to law this assumption is a weak expedient.

AFTER a short halt, during which its official communiqué reported "strong detachments mopping up the occupied territory," the Greek army in Asia Minor is on the move again. Its leaders claim fresh victories over the Turkish Nationalists. What is the goal of the Greek offensive? An interesting theory is suggested by The Loyal, official journal of the Greek-American Loyalists League of America. In the opinion of this publication, when the armistice was signed with Bulgaria on September 30th, 1918, the Greek army should at once have been returned to a peace footing. There was no need for the larger army. It was a luxury which Greece could ill afford. Farming, manufacture and commerce needed the workmen who would be freed from military service. What reason did Venizelos have for holding off from demobilization? Did he hope to make the Peace Conference pay for Greek demobilization by yielding to whatever territorial demands Greece put forward?

SUCH an interpretation of the policy of Venizelos is nonsense, in the opinion of the Greek-American journal we are quoting. Venizelos had other reasons for not wanting demobilization of the army. "The moment the Greek army might be demobilized, there would no longer be any excuse (1) for retaining martial law in Greece; (2) for censorship of private mail and a muzzling of the press; (3) for further postponement of elections in Greece, which have not been held since May, 1915. . . . Venizelos knew that the moment the Greeks returned to their homes and elections were called, he would be overwhelmingly defeated at the polls. . . . He had to find some way to keep the Greek voters away from home. The simple and easy way was to keep them mobilized."

THE Greek-American Loyalists League of America doubtless has its own axe to grind in the politics of Greece, but its analysis is reasonable enough. Venizelos has been preaching patriotism. The Greeks are essentially a peace-loving people. To lead them on their present venture, declares The Loyal, "he [Venizelos] had to drug them with swaggering, militaristic, imperialistic talk about new conquests, vast enlargements of a country unable

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even to meet its present obligations; he had to beat the patriotic tom-tom and inflame the people of Greece with lust of conquests. The old, old game of every Roman tyrant"—and of more than one statesman of twentieth century Europe—"who sought to cling to power by appealing to patriotism." As a corollary of the enterprise it is not likely that Greece will make substantial gains in territory. What the Great Powers want in Asia Minor they will probably take, irrespective of Greek armies.

Why is the Blockade Lifted?

IT is a spectacular gesture which the American Department of State makes in the direction of Russia. On Wednesday of last week came this announcement:

> The restrictions which have heretofore stood in the way of trade and communication with Soviet Russia were today removed by action of the Department of State.

This is an important first sentence. Apparently, at any rate the Department has come to learn that there has actually existed a blockade of Soviet Russia. Eight months ago it did not know that. Writing to Senator Wadsworth (in a letter made public on November 5th) Assistant Secretary Phillips disposed of "the so-called blockade of Russia."

> "I beg to inform you," he said, "that so far as the United States is concerned no blockade exists."

The Department has made progress.

But its progress consists chiefly in recognizing that a blockade has been in force. It claims, to be sure, that it has now removed "the restrictions which have heretofore stood in the way of trade and communication with Soviet Russia." Let us see how true this is.

"Political recognition," says the Department, "present or future, of any Russian authority exercising or claiming to exercise governmental functions is neither granted nor implied by this action." There is nothing unexpected about that. And nothing disastrous to a new policy. Those who have wanted medical supplies sent to the stricken cities of Russia, those who have wanted the wheels of industry to turn again on the continent, have described as the essential measure not the political recognition of Soviet Russia, but the lifting of barriers both artificial and stupid.

We should like to know just what important restrictions upon trade with Russia the State Department believes have now been lifted. Consider those which remain in force. The Department's statement lists them. In the first place, restrictions are *not* to be lifted on "the shipment of materials susceptible of immediate use for war purposes." What will that include? The Department does not suggest an answer. Locomotives? Locomotives, when guns are to be moved and supplies transported to the front, are certainly "materials susceptible of immediate use for war purposes." But locomotives are also what a country vitally needs to keep its farms and factories supplied. Locomotives, in fact, are needed to bring to the seaport those very products which would make trade with Russia profitable.

Assume, however, that the term "susceptible of immediate war use" will be narrowly defined so as to exclude from export only such shipments as cannon and munitions. What then? It should be emphasized, says the proclamation of the State Department, "that individuals or corporations availing themselves of the present opportunity to trade with Russia will do so on their own responsibility and at their own risk. The assistance which the United States can normally extend to its citizens who engage in trade or travel in some foreign country whose Government is recognized by the United States cannot be looked for in the present case, since there is no official or representative Russian authority with which this Government can maintain the relations usually subsisting between nations."

Specifically what does such a warning mean? The Department goes on to explain, in a series of remarkable sentences:

1. "Passports for Russia cannot be issued."
2. "Nor will any change be made in the visé regulations now in force."
3. "The Post Office Department will be unable to accept mail from or to Soviet Russia." (Yet, says the first sentence of the Department's statement, "the restrictions" on "communication" have been "removed.")
4. "Parcels post . . . . is unavailable."
5. "The action which the United States is now taking in no wise constitutes a recognition of the validity of industrial or commercial concessions granted by any existing Russian authority."
6. "American citizens availing themselves of the present relaxation of restrictions are warned against the risks incident to the acceptance of commodities or other values the title of which may later be brought into question." That is, the Department will not commit itself on the question whether or not the French claim to legal ownership of the Russian gold reserve and other movable values is good. It is not in international law; why does the State Department pretend that it may be, except to deter men from availing themselves of the privilege of trading which the department makes a show of granting?

Taken at its face value the State Department's announcement is nothing but a pleasantry. Imagine a merchant in New York attempting trade with a merchant in Chicago—let alone one overseas—

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under the restrictions that still remain in force despite the "lifting" of the blockade. He learns through some roundabout channel, perhaps he only hears the rumor, that gas-engines are wanted in Chicago. What sort of gas-engines, whether one or ten thousand, who wants them, he does not know. How is he to find out? The Government will not carry a letter for him from New York to Chicago. It will not carry a letter from Chicago to New York. Nor will it let him go in person to Chicago to ask questions. What, then, *will* it let him do? Well, he can guess at the number of gas-engines wanted, guess at the models that will probably be most appreciated in Chicago, and prepare a shipment for whomever he thinks might be most interested in their arrival. Of course, his engines may be held up at the discretion of the War Trade Board—on the ground that they are "materials susceptible of immediate use for war purposes." But perhaps they will go through. And perhaps he will be paid for them. To be sure, the Government does not recognize the right of his customer to grant industrial or commercial concessions by way of payment. Nor will it try to protect him against confiscation. But if he chooses to go ahead, on these conditions, and can puzzle out a way of doing it, there is nothing to prevent him! The partisans of the blockade, with the exception of the New York Times, are expressing satisfaction with the action of the State Department. The blockade is gone, yet there is no trade. Which demonstrates, they will assert, that the blockade never had anything to do with economic disintegration and famine in Russia.

But perhaps we wrong the State Department by taking its action at face value. Perhaps, in this instance, our State Department has been merely a pawn in the game of a more competent European diplomacy. It is worth reflecting on this point: In so far as the blockade has actually been lifted, what reasons does Washington offer for its action that would not have been equally valid a year ago? Washington has accepted no new light on the character of the Soviet government. It explicitly affirms its consistency on this point. Washington recognizes now that the blockade rested most heavily upon the weakest groups in Russian society, those least responsible for the policies of the Soviet government. But only babes and sucklings were ignorant, a year ago, of the normal workings of a blockade. Washington now realizes that the blockade has been a magnificent talking point for Bolshevik agitators throughout the world. Was Washington so devoid of imagination that it could not foresee this effect of Allied policy, a year ago?

Neither in the matter nor in the manner of its action on the blockade does the State Department look as if it moved through its own inner force. The hypothesis of puppet action forces itself upon the observer. Where is the string? Most strings, nowadays, lead to Lloyd George. Let us examine the recent acts of that versatile statesman. They may be illuminating.

For many weeks Lloyd George has been conducting negotiations with the Soviet government. Apparently he had become convinced that the Soviet government was not the confection of cobwebs and dew that it had been represented to be. It beat Kolchak, Denikin and Yudenitch; it not only beat them, but took from them enough guns and munitions to overwhelm the Poles. If there were anywhere in sight some force that might have a chance of overthrowing the Soviet government, Lloyd George might play with it. Since Budenny's cavalry drove the Poles out of Kiev, Lloyd George has despaired of the existence of such a force. The Soviet government is a substantial reality, de facto. And as a practical statesman Lloyd George throws aside his prejudices and proceeds to do business with it.

There were several points on which conditions had to be defined. They were, according to Moscow dispatches, the refraining from inimical acts and official propaganda on both sides; liberty to return home for British subjects held in Russia and Russian subjects held in England; recognition by Russia of property claims of British subjects upon the old Russian government and its subjects; and a mutual trading basis. Krassin, having worked out these conditions with Lloyd George, returned to Moscow to get Lenin's assent. Why? Was not the wireless available? We have a surmise that there were other conditions that could not be entrusted to the wireless; namely, that Lenin should bind himself not to conduct propaganda through the Third International, and that Lloyd George should use his good offices to call off Poland, through pressure on France. We have no evidence of the existence of the first condition, except that it would be childish for Lloyd George to make stipulations concerning official propaganda, and none concerning the unofficial propaganda of the Third International, which in fact does all the work of Bolshevik propaganda. As to the second condition, we have the evidence that Lloyd George has actually deterred France from aiding Poland, and has advised the Poles to proceed to make peace and confine themselves to their own natural domain.

It must have been difficult for Lloyd George to persuade France to move toward peace with Russia. But what if a third Power, of whose commercial capacities France is jealous should announce its intention of lifting the blockade? France would then find herself in danger of be-

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ing left high and dry, with nothing to back up her demand for the settlement of French property claims on Russia. For if Russia could trade with a third Power, the British commercial public would refuse to stay out. And if relations were resumed with England and a third Power, say America, Russia could dispense with France. An American announcement lifting the blockade was just the kind of pressure Lloyd George needed to bring France around. But the blockade must not be lifted too high, or the Soviet government could not be brought around to satisfy French claims.

"Thus far shalt thou go and no farther." We hasten to disavow any belief that Lloyd George actually mapped out the policy of Washington, in detail, or even in general principle. American policy met Lloyd George's requirements as if made to order. Did not Keynes assert that Lloyd George had five or six senses of which the ordinary man knows nothing? Perhaps he also has some new power of suggestion, by which he can work upon foreign state departments to take action which, so far as their knowledge goes, is a flat humbug, but which nevertheless pieces well into the scheme of world diplomacy.

Cox in Wilson's Shoes

MR. BRYAN sturdily laments the selection of Governor Cox as standard-bearer of his party. "My heart is in the grave with our hopes," he says, "and I must pause until it comes back to me." The Administration in Washington, however, seems to see no such gloomy future ahead. A special dispatch to the New York World reports that "President Wilson and every Administration leader in Washington are greatly pleased with the nomination of Governor Cox. Every member of the Cabinet and every Democrat of influence, according to opinions expressed today, will be solidly behind the Governor. The feeling of the leaders was summed up today by Joseph P. Tumulty, Secretary to the President, who said: "The leaders of the party have never been so optimistic of success before an election as they are today as a result of the nomination of Governor Cox."

Cox, of all candidates at San Francisco, stood farthest from the White House. Unlike his most formidable rivals he has never had a corner of his own in the official family. Unlike even his less formidable rivals he has never been close enough to bask even in reflected glory. On what ground, then, do we find the Administration so enthusiastic?

For a clue we turn once more to that Washington office of the World which is presumed to know as much as anyone about the pleasure of the Administration. "While President Wilson has not officially made any statement concerning the nomination," says a special dispatch to the World, "he is known to be impressed because of the knowledge that Governor Cox has unwaveringly supported the Administration, and especially because of his support of the League of Nations as it was presented to the Senate."

If these various excerpts from the World are accurately inspired, and in our judgment they seem to be, the Administration in Washington is at the present moment straining every nerve to find in Governor Cox not a leader but a protegé. It is easy enough to see why. The Republicans are not going to endorse the Administration in their campaign, and if Mr. Cox doesn't endorse it no one else is likely to. What is less clear is how the Administration leaders can see in the nomination of Cox, or pretend to see, a vindication of their own record.

The two activities of the Administration since the armistice which have been the center of most controversy, and must therefore be the center of any "vindication," are the President's insistence upon ratification of the Treaty without reservation and the career of Mr. A. Mitchell Palmer. These two activities are of a widely different sort, but they are high points in the Administration's record since November, 1918. It is hard to see how Governor Cox can be tied up with either one of them.

Certainly at every turn his policy has been in sharp contrast to that of Mr. Palmer. The Attorney-General believes in raids and in restrictions upon freedom of speech. Mr. Cox does not. During the steel strike he insisted that the rights of speech be maintained in the steel towns of his state. Mr. Palmer believes in the use of violence—when it is the violence of the federal agent. Governor Cox apparently does not. He does not even believe in the necessity of calling out militia in such a way that the morale of a strike is broken. Not once in the six years of his Governorship, in fact, has he called out militia for a purpose of that sort. Nor does Mr. Cox believe, as Mr. Palmer does, that injunctions will mine coal. At the very moment when Mr. Palmer was boasting of his injunction against the miners Governor Cox was in effect repudiating Mr. Palmer by going ahead independently to call a meeting of operators and miners in Ohio to work for a settlement of the strike insofar as it affected his own state. To gauge just how far Cox has stood from the hysteria-hunting Palmer, read these words (from a speech of his, at Chicago) and fit them to the policy of the Attorney-General:

"There is some hysteria over the subject of

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> the active elements in this country that are menacing to the government. There is no danger in the situation, although it might easily be aggravated if the governmental policy of restraint and common sense that has endured through the years were to become one of force and terrorism. . . . If government is assailed, its policy must not become vengeful. Our fathers, in specifying what human freedom was, and providing guarantees for its preservation, recognized that among the necessary precautions was the protection of individual rights against governmental abuses."

So far as the Red Hysteria goes, then, Cox does not carry on for the Administration. Does he carry on, for the League and Treaty?

Nowhere, in this second issue, is his position so unmistakably defined. Red Hysteria was a question with which, as Governor of an industrial state, he was called upon to deal. The League was no such question. He intends, however, says a special dispatch to the World from Dayton, "to keep the faith." But apparently he is willing to support some sort of reservations "for the sake of those who have conscientious fears . . . that the League might become an alliance for war instead of an organization to prevent it." This is interesting news, and conceivably reservations written to such a point might break the present deadlock. In any event, whatever the position of Governor Cox today, the fact remains that in the past he has stood outside the whole controversy in the Senate. Not only has he been outside that controversy, but he has never been one of those summoned into council by the Administration in the hope of getting action. What Cox knew about the Treaty fight he knew as a reader of the newspapers. Throughout the controversy his role was that of spectator. If the San Francisco Convention aimed to choose a man "especially because of his support of the League of Nations as it was presented to the Senate," a man in the first ranks of the anti-reservations army, then its aim was wide indeed.

Cox may have been chosen at San Francisco because as Mark Sullivan thinks, the delegates were tired of hearing about McAdoo—or chosen by accident, as Bruce Bliven says—or by the big wet bosses, as William Allen White believes. Nevertheless, whether or not so intended, the selection of a candidate so hostile to the Palmer creed and so dissociated from the entire League campaign comes nearer being a desertion than an endorsement of the Administration. Cox is not yet in Woodrow Wilson's shoes. Mr. Tumulty hails him with enthusiasm. The President, so the World assures us, "is known to be impressed because of the knowledge that Governor Cox has unwaveringly supported the Administration." An uncritical confederate of everything the Administration has done may indeed be the role that Cox is heading for. But the choice is his own to make. It is not to be announced from Washington.

The Elwell Case

BY this time the Elwell murder, being some five or six weeks old, has instigated a few hundred thousand persons to affirm what they appear always to have suspected more or less, namely, that the wages of sin is death. No blame attaches to these preachers, whether in or out of holy orders, for drawing such an inference. They could not have done otherwise. To expect them to leave this occasion unimproved, this inference undrawn, would be like handing a corkscrew and a bottle to a thirsty man, and then expecting him not to draw the cork. So freely and so meritoriously has the moral of the case been spoken and printed that we purpose in this article to ignore morals, and to confine ourselves to putting down some of the more obvious traits which distinguished the Elwell from ordinary murders, which give it a greater news value than all but a select few of its competitors can claim.

On the afternoon of June eleventh newspaper readers all over the United States learned with surprise that somebody had killed Elwell on Bridge. With surprise? The word is not strong enough. These readers would have been only a little less bewildered by an announcement that the Revised Statutes had sunk in midocean with all hands, that a mob of our leading Texans had lynched Spalding's Baseball Guide, or that some bachelor, trustful and deeply wronged, had brought an action for breach of promise against Mrs. Lincoln's Boston Cook Book. Students of bridge by mail or express, these readers had not conceived of Elwell as anything but a lawgiver, authoritative and remote, an institution, a fleshless abstraction. There was in addition a group much smaller but still numerous, whose members, scattered about the United States, had at one time or another taken lessons from Mr. Elwell in person, and recollected him as a quiet man, discreetly amused now and then, unobtrusive without being obtrusively unobtrusive. Interesting to watch the transformation of this man imperfectly known, or of this abstraction, into the concrete and particularized Elwell familiar to the third and smallest group, his intimates.

Even if this transformation had never taken place, even if Mr. Elwell had remained as colorless as President Pierce or Senator Harding, the facts

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were odd enough to interest everybody who likes a detective story. The curtain goes up at half past eight in the morning and discloses Elwell, sitting at his desk in a room on the ground floor of his own house, his morning mail partly opened and partly unopened, in his pyjamas, a bullet through his head. He dies without recovering consciousness. The bullet is found in the wall behind him. The revolver it came from, a forty-five, is not found although detectives, rather late it is true, search the house from top to bottom. Suicide? The revolver might conceivably have been fired from no further away than the length of the dead man's own arm, but if suicide, what has become of that revolver? Mrs. Larsen, the discoverer of the crime, the housekeeper who sleeps out—may she not have hidden it? But what motive could she have had for hiding it which would not have been stronger still if she had thought the killing a murder? Well, perhaps that is what she did think, suspecting a murderer she was willing to shield. Her protective instincts are strong. Didn't they lead her to remove a woman's cap and kimono from a room upstairs, to hide them in a laundry tub, and not to tell the district attorney what she had done? But this instance is the one lie she has been caught in, is apparently the only one she has told. From first to last she has denied knowledge of any revolver. Add one other fact, that nobody has been found who saw anybody entering or leaving Elwell's house near eight o'clock, at about which hour the doctors say the shot must have been fired, and you have the anatomy of the murder, its bare bones. The murderer has made his getaway, leaving neither revolver, witness nor finger-print behind.

A motive must be found, and the search for a motive leads Mr. Swann, New York's talkative district attorney, to make first a survey and then an intensive study of the late Mr. Elwell's acquaintance. And, as Mr. Swann's motto seems to be that although many secrets may be hid from him, few shall be hid by him, the public is privileged to follow the progress of his research. Little by little it finds itself growing familiar with Mr. Elwell's habits, which were extensive and peculiar. He had a house at Palm Beach, he was in treaty for a house at Saratoga. He had a racing stable in Kentucky, and there is a rumor that he lately seduced a Kentucky lady, one of whose relatives, probably a male, may have followed him to New York and shot him. Nothing in this rumor. Detectives explode it. But there were other women in Elwell's life, Palm Beach women, race track women, zealous students of bridge, women of a world so high that they lived in Fifth Avenue (think of that!), women of humbler station whom he would "accost" from his motor, pick up and take to drive. How many women had keys to his New York house? None, in all probability, or not more than one, else there might have been encounters and collisions, but enough has been said in the papers to give imagination its food, and many stable citizens have been helped to visions of a motley army of women, pure women, light ladies, notable young baggages, demi-reps, demi-vierges, each armed with a key. Very creditable to the communicative Mr. Swann is his reticence about the names of Mr. Elwell's women friends. He has given out only two or three names altogether, and these only after sweet, reluctant, amorous delay. Women and mystery! What more would you have in a murder case, except a better reason for supposing that at the centre of this mystery there is a woman? For boot-legging, prosaic everyday boot-legging, may after all be at the bottom of the Elwell murder. He may have bought several thousand cases of whiskey, intending to sell the same at a profit, and have neglected to pay. His creditor, angered by repeated puttings-off and unable to call in the aid of the law, may have shot him. Let us hope not. Let us try to believe not. It is so much more satisfactory to believe that Mr. Elwell, who lived for women, and who at the age of forty-five could still fascinate some of them, was killed by one of them. In this belief many of us have been reading the Elwell case, in this belief we have enjoyed our alternating views of the astonishing Mr. Swann, seen now as a director of suspicion, by dint of public attacks on their alibis, against men whom he does not suspect; now as some eccentric rider, quaintly addicted to the habit of dragging red herrings across the track he is supposed to be following. Even if he should solve his problem at last Mr. Swann will be remembered for some time as one of our most voluble district attorneys. Elwell, either as the man murdered by so-and-so, or as a man mysteriously murdered, will be remembered somewhat longer, for the reasons we have given. And perhaps, come to think of it, for at least one other reason. As a bridge-player he was not handicapped. As a pleaser of women he was handicapped. He wore a wig. A wig? Forty wigs were found in his New York house, and would even appear to have been counted. How many kimonos did Mrs. Larsen, admirably eager to protect her sex against scandal, whisk away from that room upstairs and secrete in a washtub? Only one. Perhaps Mr. Elwell will be remembered also as the man who bought more wigs than he needed and fewer kimonos. Or shall we be charitable enough to remember him only as the author of several good books, which his widow thinks she wrote?

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Picking a New Quarrel

THE right of international industries to dominate the foreign policy of the United States is not, perhaps, established to the satisfaction of the constitutional lawyers. But there is no doubt in the minds of directors and stockholders that the prerogative exists. The control of Mexico all but assured, they turn naturally and hopefully to the problem of Canada. As every one knows Canada possesses extensive and valuable forests. Again, by common repute, forests are chiefly valuable in the form of newsprint. And newsprint is difficult to obtain in the United States, so difficult that we secure two-thirds of our supply from across the border. It follows, then, that any attempt on the part of the Canadians to conserve their forests is an affront to the majesty of the United States. Let him who doubts hear the pronouncement of Senator Underwood: "I say we should appoint a commission and let them (the Canadians) know that if they are not willing to yield we will ask this commission to report in what shape an embargo shall lay on their backs until they quit.—I intend that the bill shall have a big stick in it, and if they are not going to do the fair thing we will make them." This is the true idiom of statesmanlike wrath.

And what is the "fair thing" which the government of Canada has so stubbornly refused to do? What new laws and restrictive measures enacted in the Dominion call for American embargoes by way of retaliation? Ten years ago the provinces of Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick enacted laws prohibiting the export of unmanufactured wood from the Crown Lands. (There were not then nor are there today restrictions on the exportation of wood from private lands, nor any restrictions on the export of pulp or paper.) It does not appear that these enactments were met with objection at the time of their passage. But there is today complaint from certain American manufacturers who leased portions of the Crown Lands prior to the restrictions but subject, as they must have known, to the right of the provinces to exercise their proper police power over the disposition of Canadian produce. Even under Marshall's interpretation of our Contract Clause it was held that the state could not contract away its powers of regulation. And the Dartmouth College case was never law across the border.

The cause of the present dissatisfaction is not recent legislation on the part of Canada but a recent rise in the price of paper in the United States due to the improvident use of American timber by these same manufacturers of newsprint or their predecessors. It is now profitable to rebel and Congress has heard from the aggrieved lessees through the small "home papers," which have suffered most acutely from the shortage. The result is the so-called Underwood Resolution providing for a Commission to be appointed by the President to induce the Canadian government to remove its restrictions (restrictions, incidentally, which are not federal but provincial) on the exportation of pulpwood from the Crown Lands, in order that the leased tracts may be opened to the operation of American lumber gangs.

It must be obvious from any point of view other than that of the American lessees that, even if Canada should yield to Senator Underwood's diplomatic blandishments, the best interests of the newsprint industry would not be secured. Canada has made the same mistake we have made. The paper industry has developed beyond the present capacity of the forests to maintain it. Already private remedial measures have been necessitated.

To force Canada to increase in any way her export of pulp-wood would hasten the exhaustion of the North American supply and would directly impoverish forests which export 85 per cent of their print-paper manufacture to the United States. It is true that the provincial restrictions are not adequate; that they look to the protection of Canadian mills rather than to an absolute prohibition on cutting. But in their effect they are necessarily conservative measures. And the remedy for the present paper stringency in the United States is an international policy of conservation and reforesting, not an international misunderstanding resulting from the trade grievance of a few promoters of industry, and the fulminations of an angry Senator.

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EDITORS

HERBERT CROLY — CHARLES MERZ
FRANCIS HACKETT — WALTER LIPPMANN
ALVIN JOHNSON — PHILIP LITTELL
SIGNE TOKSVIG, Assistant Editor

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Is Harding a Republican?

IF an optimist is a man who makes lemonade out of all the lemons that are handed to him, then Senator Harding is the greatest of all optimists. He has been told by his friends and his critics that he is colorless and without sap, commonplace and dull, weak and servile. Right you are, says the Senator. You have described exactly the kind of man this country needs. It has tried Roosevelt and Wilson, and look. It can't stand the gaff. I am nothing that they were. I am no superman like Roosevelt and no superthinker like Wilson. Therefore, I am just the man you are looking for. How do I know that? I am distinguished by the fact that nothing distinguishes me. I am marked for leadership because I have no marks upon me. I am just the man because no one can think of a single reason why I am the man. If any one happens to think of a reason then I shall cease to be that normal man which these abnormal times demand.

Just what is Mr. Harding trying to say anyway? Presumably some idea is lodged in his brain and panting for utterance beyond the normal human impulse to find a good reason for his own candidacy. For the sake of good appearances in history, I suppose that Mr. Harding is not exalting his defects as do the preternaturally wise animals in Clarence Day's This Simian World. He can't just be the one-eyed man who is against two-eyed men, or the tortoise who thinks the hare leads too fast a life. Some other idea is sprouting on that front porch in Marion.

That idea, probably, is that the Presidency has grown too big for any man, and that the time has come for decentralizing its power. There are conceivably two ways this might be done. One way would be to think out a plan for adapting responsible cabinet government to the congressional system. It is a way that would require an abnormal lot of thinking. It would require also a quarrel with Congress. For until Congress disgorges its petty control over the details of administration, Congress will not be fit to take upon itself major control of executive policy. But Congress at present is so much concerned with the things that do not belong to it, that it has no opportunity to be concerned with the things that do. The relation of Congress to administration is like that of a general staff so tremendously interested in the second lieutenants, that it ignores the lieutenant-generals. The result is that the general can't command the lieutenants, and the lieutenants' hair is forever standing on end while they try to obey the swivel chairs. Mr. Harding's remedy for this is to sack the general and find someone who will be content with four stars and will keep his mouth shut.

There is something in it. If you can't think of any way to redistribute the functions of government, then all you have to do is to find a President who will be so weak that power will leave him. That is the inner meaning of Mr. Harding's nomination. He was put there by the Senators for the sole purpose of abdicating in their favor. The Grand Dukes have chosen their weak Tsar in order to increase the power of the Grand Dukes. And if he is elected the period will be known in our constitutional history as the Regency of the Senate.

What will this accomplish? It will reduce the prestige and the power of the White House. Will it create a better balance of prestige and power in the whole government? Hardly. The gentlemen who intend to benefit by Mr. Harding's abnormal normality are a group tiny enough to meet in a hotel bedroom. They are not the elected Congress of the United States. Their rise to power would mean not the restoration of a balance between executive and legislature but the substitution of government by a clique for the lonely majesty of the President. Dangerous as is the plight we are in, it has at least the advantage of visibility. The President may be an autocrat, yet every one knows where that autocrat lives. But the government of a clique, an invisible, self-invited collection of friends, would be just nothing but the return of exactly what every decent person has fought against for a generation.

That the glory of the normal should be presented to a weary nation as the purest Republican doctrine according to the Fathers is one of those paradoxes which Mr. Chesterton says, always sit beside the wells of truth. It is in fact primitive Democratic doctrine. That doctrine has always been that anybody could govern, that leadership was dangerous, excellence somewhat un-American, and specialized knowledge somewhat sinister. The Republicans from Hamilton's time on have always professed belief that ability mattered, and that no system of government could succeed in which the best men were not preeminent. They may have had some queer notions about what constituted the best men, but they have at least done this republic the service of refusing to accept the idea that anybody could do anything. They have not in theory at least stooped to encourage the democratic vices. Mr. Harding does. I hate to say it, but

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he is in ultimate theory a great deal closer to Mr. Bryan than he is to any great Republican from Hamilton to Root. For Mr. Bryan has that same simple faith that any deserving fellow can do anything, which Mr. Harding has now brought forth from the caverns of his mind.

WALTER LIPPMANN.

A Superb Ironist

FOR George Bellows irony multiplies the significance and interest of the world. Whether it shows him the ugly or terribly ugly, with adjectival literalness, or points the humor in some unimportant and manifestly stupid situation, irony is his weapon and his tool. This sense, the product of bitter experience working on an imaginative mind, is a rarity anywhere. It is signally absent from that art where line and color or form and values are the medium of expression. Unless art consents to be illustrative, and therefore to present a story, it can scarcely waken this harsh humor in the beholder. And it is in his lithographs, in their dramatic and pictorial aspect, that Bellows seems to me to achieve this distinction.

I think especially of certain of his large productions, gloomy spacious things, with a few enormous figures crouching and standing about in attitudes of abandon or distress. There is one, worthy of Degas, where a hopelessly fat woman lies on her back on the floor, one huge leg upraised, while in the bed at her side her husband sleeps the sleep of the tired business man; his mouth is slightly open, he may snore; but neither of the horrible pair is of sufficient interest to the other even to be disturbing. It is called, simply, Reducing. This is frankly ugly. But there are others, equally ironical, which do not so inspire disgust. Benediction in Georgia shows a plump, bearded, sanctimonious preacher (you know he is sanctimonious by the flex of his uplifted arm) addressing a congregation of negro convicts. Their large, bent bodies are clothed in a horrid striped uniform, and as they sit on the hard benches in various attitudes of inattention, the barred clothing seems to glare out like the symbolism of Ibsen and announce the hideous spiritual bondage of these bored wretches. More harsh yet is the very vivid lithograph of an electrocution, the gasping victim bound to the chair, the stupid witnesses standing helplessly by. And for sheer drama few things surpass his portrait of the Tabernacle: in the foreground a crowd of fainting, sobbing, hysterical women and girls, supported by men to whom this is a usual and not particularly dismaying business, beyond them, reaching athletically from a flag-draped platform, the Rev. Mr. William Sunday with his muscular smile and his mechanical handgrasp. It is so real, so rich in the thick unpleasant atmosphere of the place, that one turns away with a short sigh of release.

To those for whom beauty and ugliness are as oil to vinegar these strong black pictures can have little to say. They are as dreadful as reality, and as intolerable. But to those for whom the line between beauty and ugliness is as difficult to draw as that between organic and inorganic matter, these lithographs will give, among other things, the pleasure of the attempt to define that line. For aside from excellent drawing, the nice sense of values, and the direction of emphasis, these scenes insist by very contrast on a life that is normal, active, and receptive. There are other large lithographs, which have the same strength, but which deal less with the morbid and the vile, and more with common healthy humanity. Bellows goes to the prize-ring and the public park for these things, and one gets all the thrill of contesting powers in beholding the clutch of those two wrestling bodies, and the joy of crowds in the forward thrust of the spectators, or in the serene Sunday mob on the grass and flooding the thoroughfares.

He has his lyrical moments as well. There is a kind satire in Solitude: the secure isolation of each amorous couple of the many scattered through the dusk-hidden park. And there is one picture of delightful little girls romping in the summer shrubbery, with its background of delicate trees and pale city sky-line, which is like an adult's dream of a happy childhood, all its pangs and ennui forgotten, only its joyous ignorance, its buoyant carelessness revived. He will even be generously familiar with us for a bit, taking us into his studio, showing us the balcony where the presses stand, and below, all the intimate diligence of the household: the children playing on the rugs, a pretty woman at the telephone, some vaguer person by the fire. It is arresting in its charm, in the same way if for a different reason as the pleasant group of indolent shanties sketched somewhere in Maine. Above all, one remembers Pettipas', not because one recognizes such celebrities as Jack Yeats and Robert Henri and lovely Mrs. Bellows in the middle foreground, but rather for its full transmission of the scene, in all its interest and variety. Warm lights shed a friendly radiance on the crowded tables, out of the rich shadow, faces gleam with vivid presentment of amusement, curiosity, and regard. One has a humorous sympathy for the waitress, pushing her way through the debaters and raconteurs, with a kind of forgiving helplessness. A cat at a corner table familiarly demanding milk only succeeds in

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engaging attention without favors. It is all so clear and pleasant that the scent of food and cigarettes and the flavor of the chatter seem to rise out of the picture to complete it.

Atmosphere and characterization, these are the things, rather than the pen and the press, which do Bellows' work. And for both he seems to need so little. Take, for example, his several fascinating studies of the good plump sisters. Their smooth, fat, stupid faces are drawn with the severest economy of line, their fat bodies, concealed in the stiff black encasements of their calling, are firmly suggested. One feels that one could walk round them, and what is more that one would meet the same kind placid countenance, without wonder or surprise, when the circle was completed.

Irony, even its finer, gentler aspect such as is seen in these small pictures, seems to be a familiar accent in the work of American artists. If we examine the productions of John Sloan or Robert Frost, of Joseph Pennell or Henry James, we find this distinctive tendency. It may be the note of our steel and stony cities or of the confused age in which we live. To trace its origin is probably as fruitless as it is difficult, but certainly it has few more eloquent exhibitors than George Bellows, few stronger advocates of its uses and its charm.

BABETTE DEUTSCH.

On American Philosophy

IV. George Santayana *

THE philosophic temper of an age can be judged by the kind of merit it neglects as well as by what it worships. For this reason as well as for the unique value of his work, no account of American philosophy should omit the consideration of George Santayana. If a European critic like Taine were to ask for an American book of philosophy containing a distinct and comprehensive view of human life, its aims and diverse manifestations, we could not mention anything more appropriate than Santayana's Life of Reason. Most American philosophic works are either monographs on special topics or else more or less elaborate controversial pamphlets on behalf of one view or another. Santayana more than any other American since Emerson has cultivated the ancient virtue of calm detachment which distinguishes the philosopher from the partisan journalist or the zealous missionary. His zeal, if any, is that of the artist freely picturing the whole of human experience as surveyed retrospectively by one interested in the life of reason. "The unsolved problems of life and nature and the Babel of society need not disturb the genial observer." Dewey's anathemas against the purely contemplative philosopher, the "otiose observer," do not disturb one who holds that man's natural dignity and joy—as manifested in art, pure science, and philosophy—consists "in representing many things without being them; and in letting imagination, through sympathy, celebrate and echo their life." Man's proper happiness is constituted by the interest and beauty of the mind's "inward landscape rather than by any fortunes that await his body in the outer world." Philosophy is not merely a means for improving the conditions of common life, but is itself "a more intense sort of experience than common life is, just as pure and subtle music heard in retirement is something keener and more intense than the howling of storms or the rumble of cities."

That which distinguishes Santayana from all other modern philosophers is the way he combines thoroughgoing naturalism with profound appreciation of the wisdom commonly called idealism or other-wordliness. Completely free from all trace of supernaturalism in metaphysics, he is thoroughly Greek or humanistic in his valuation of those reasonable restraints which give order, dignity, and beauty to human life. Like Dewey, perhaps more than Dewey, Santayana is a thoroughgoing naturalist, believing that mind is the natural effect of bodily growth and organization. But unlike any other philosopher since Aristotle, Santayana holds fast to a sharp and clear distinction between the origin and the validity of our ideals. Though our ideals are of bodily origin they need not serve bodily needs, and above all they need no actual or sensible embodiment to justify their claims. There is no necessity for accepting the modern evolutionist's identification of the best with the latest. "Modern Greece is not exactly the crown of ancient Hellas." Other confusions between morality and physics such as the Hegelian identification of the ideal and the real, of the desirable and the existent, are vehemently rejected as servile worship of brute power and treacherous to our ideal aspirations. Thus while naturalism is the only intelligible philosophy, the attempt of naturalists to look for all motives and sanctions in the material world always generates a profound melancholy from which mankind instinctively shrinks. The sensuous optimism called Greek or the industrial optimism called American are but "thin disguises for despair," against which the mind will always rebel and revert, in some form or other, to a cultus of the unseen. The explanation of this paradoxical fact Santayana finds in a Greek distinction between the form and the brute existence of

* The substance of this article will appear in the third volume of the Cambridge History of American Literature to be published by Putnams.

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things. The form and qualities of things are congenial to the mind's free activity, but "when an empirical philosophy calls us back from the irresponsible flights of the imagination to the shock of sense and tries to remind us that in this alone we touch existence,—we feel dispossessed of our nature and cramped in our life." The true life of reason, however, is not to be found in wilful idealistic dreams, but in the logical activity which is docile to fact and illumines the actual world in which our bodies move.

As a child of Latin and Catholic civilization, Santayana is profoundly devoted to those classic forms which enshrine the wisdom and happiness of the past. He abhors German philosophy for what he calls its romantic wilfulness, that protestant or rebellious spirit which regards the mere removal of restraints as a good. "The life of reason is a heritage and exists only through tradition." Traditional forms may, indeed, cramp our life, and a vital mind like Shelley will revolt, but the end or good is not freedom but some more congenial form. Santayana holds in contempt the prevailing philosophy which glorifies striving and progress but in which there are no ends to be achieved and no ideal by which progress is to be measured.

The burden of his philosophy is the analysis of common sense, social institutions, religion, art, and science to show how reflection can distinguish the ideal from the physical embodiment in which traditional wisdom is delivered from generation to generation.

In his social philosophy he is essentially an aristocrat, valuing highly those historic institutions, cultivated forms, and reasonable restraints which impose order on our natural impulses. He recognizes the shallowness of purely personal culture and admits that our emancipated, atheistic, international democracy is not only replacing the old order, but that "like every vital impulse (it) is pregnant with a morality of its own." Religion to Santayana is essentially a mode of emancipating man from worldliness and from merely personal limitations. But the wisdom which its dogmas, ritual forms, and prayers embody is not truth about existence but about those ideals which give us internal strength and peace. To regard God as an existence rather than an ideal leads to superstition. Religious superstitions, he admits, often debauch morality and impede science, but the errors of religion should be viewed with indulgent sympathy. Thus Catholic dogma is viewed as involving a reasonable deference to authority but leaving the mind essentially free. In his theory of art Santayana follows his master, Aristotle, closely in spirit though not in words. Art looks at life from above and portraying our passions in their beauty makes them interesting and delightful, at the same time softening their vital compulsion. "Art is abstract and inconsequential . . . nothing concerns it less than to influence the world." But in revealing beauty it gives us the best hint of the ultimate good which life offers. Without this sight of beauty the soul would not continue its mortal toil. Perhaps the most characteristic of Santayana's views is his estimate of the value of modern science for the life of reason or civilization. He accords full recognition to mechanical science not merely as a source of useful insight but as a liberation of the human soul. But though the various parts of science are mutually illuminating, scientific achievement is fragmentary and a mechanical science like physiologic psychology may not give a man as much insight as does some poetic suggestion. Science grows out of common experience, but its power is new, comparatively feeble, and easily blighted. "The experience of the vanity of the world, of sin, of salvation, of miracle, of strange revelations, and of mystic loves, is a far deeper, more primitive, and therefore probably more lasting human possession than is that of clear historical or scientific ideas."

Why, in spite of the incomparable distinction and modernity of his work, has Santayana received so little recognition? In part this is doubtless due to the unfortunate manner in which his principal book, The Life of Reason, is written—a manner which does not attract the public and repels the professional philosopher. Despite unusual felicity of diction and a cadence which often reminds us of Walter Pater, his books are difficult reading. It is difficult to find the exact thought because of his preference for pithy and oracular aphorisms rather than for fully and clearly developed arguments. His abstract and distant view of the world unrolls itself without any vivid or passionate incidents to grip our attention. In the main, however, Santayana has failed to draw fire because few people are interested in a frankly speculative and detached philosophy that departs radically from the accepted traditions and makes no appeal to the partisan zeal of either conservatives or reformers. He does not aim to be edifying or scientifically informing. American philosophy has attracted two types of mind—those to whom philosophy is religion rationalized, and those (a smaller but perhaps growing number) to whom philosophy is a scientific method of dealing with certain general ideas. To the former a combination of atheistic catholicism and anti-puritanic, non-democratic, aesthetic morality, lacking withal in missionary enthusiasm, typifies almost all that is abhorrent. To the scientific group Santayana is

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just a speculative poet who may value science very highly but does so as a well-groomed gentleman who knows it at a polite distance, afraid to soil his hands with its grimy details. These judgments illustrate the great tragedy of modern philosophy. In view of the enormous expansion of modern knowledge and the increased rigor of scientific accuracy, the philosopher can no longer pretend to universal knowledge and yet he cannot abandon the universe as his province. Genuinely devoted to philosophy's ancient and humanly indispensable task of drawing a picture or unified plan of the world in which we live, Santayana is willing to abandon the pretension to scientific accuracy and to face the problem as a poet or moralist. But whether because interest in a unified world view is weak and the possession of poetic faculty such as Santayana's uncommon, or whether because philosophy has been too long wedded to logical argumentation and scientific pretensions, the dominant tendency is to make philosophy like one of the special sciences, dealing in a technical way with a limited field. As philosophy is thus abandoning its old pretensions to be the sovereign and legislative science—it is no longer taught by the college president himself—all the fields of concrete information, physics, economics, politics, psychology, and even logic, are parcelled out among the special sciences and there is nothing left to the philosopher except the problem as to the nature of knowledge itself. On this problem Santayana has some suggestive hints, but no definitely worked out solution. Hence his essential loneliness. But perhaps every true philosopher like the true poet, is essentially lonely.

MORRIS R. COHEN.

Four Preludes on Playthings of the Wind

("The past is a bucket of ashes.")

1.

The woman named Tomorrow
sits with a hairpin in her teeth
and takes her time
and does her hair the way she wants it
and fastens at last the last braid and coil
and puts the hairpin where it belongs
and turns and drawls: Well, what of it?
My grandmother, Yesterday, is gone.
What of it? Let the dead be dead.

2.

The doors were cedar
and the panels strips of gold
and the girls were golden girls
and the panels read and the girls chanted:
We are the greatest city,
the greatest nation:
nothing like us ever was.

The doors are twisted on broken hinges.
Sheets of rain swish through on the wind
where the golden girls ran and the panels read:
We are the greatest city,
the greatest nation:
nothing like us ever was.

3.

It has happened before.
Strong men put up a city and got
a nation together,
And paid singers to sing and women
to warble:
We are the greatest city,
the greatest nation:
nothing like us ever was.

And while the singers sang
and the strong men listened
and paid the singers well
and felt good about it all,
there were rats and lizards who listened
.. and the only listeners left now
.. are .. the rats .. and the lizards.

And there are black crows
crying, "Caw, caw."
bringing mud and sticks
building a nest
over the words carved
on the doors where the panels were cedar
and the strips on the panels were gold
and the golden girls came singing:
We are the greatest city,
the greatest nation:
nothing like us ever was.

The only singers now are crows crying, "Caw, caw,"
And the sheets of rain whine in the wind and doorways.
And the only listeners now are .. the rats .. and the lizards.

4.

The feet of the rats
scribble on the door sills;
the hieroglyphs of the rat footprints
chatter the pedigrees of the rats
and babble of the blood
and gabble of the breed
of the grandfathers and the great-grandfathers
of the rats.

And the wind shifts
and the dust on the door sill shifts
and even the writing of the rat footprints
tells us nothing, nothing at all
about the greatest city, the greatest nation
where the strong men listened
and the women warbled: Nothing like us ever was.

CARL SANDBURG.

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Mandates

A SPIRITED debate in the British House of Commons on the tiny island of Nauru has raised once more the whole question of the League of Nations and its mandates. Nauru, a rock of almost solid phosphate, in the Pacific, was captured from the Germans in the first week of the war, and the Allies by a preliminary decision at Paris, confided the provisional mandate for its administration to the British Empire. The League as yet has neither confirmed this decision, nor drawn up the terms of the mandate. None the less, our government has laid a bill before Parliament which provides not merely for the administration of the island, but also for the disposal of its yield of phosphates. The rights of the existing company are bought out, and an imperial state monopoly will replace it. The phosphates are to be divided between Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand. If they cannot absorb the whole of the annual output, the residue may be sold to the rest of the world at the competitive market price. The attack on this cynical arrangement was delivered with fire and ability by Lord Robert Cecil and his little group of independent conservative Internationalists, with the support of the free liberals and labor. The debate was interesting, mainly because it showed the total inability of our governing class to understand the ethical ideas behind the League of Nations. The deal, they argued, was "good business," as it certainly is. Our agriculture needs phosphates, and by this arrangement it secures an adequate supply at cost price. That any other country may also need phosphates, that the League has been treated in this bill as a negligible unreality, that the mandates were to be held as "a sacred trust of civilization," that the riches of the soil of these territories should be shared on equal terms among all the members of the League —these are evidently the ideas only of a small minority. The government carried its bill by a huge majority, as it will carry the still less defensible arrangements for disposing of the oil of Mesopotamia. "Mandates" are today the cynic's favorite jest.

The history of this curious device of colonial mandates illustrates at once the strength and the weakness of idealistic movements in the world today. The repugnance which all socialists and some liberals felt at the thought of waging "a war of liberation" for the usual ends of conquest, had a certain influence upon the Allied governments. The pressure for a peace based on the Stockholm formulae was strong during the dark months of 1917. Disillusion was at work more especially after the secret treaties were published. We know moreover that our acquisitive propensities are not favorably regarded in America. This volume of criticism was strong enough to suggest to our rulers that it might be wise to avoid the appearance of annexation. It was too weak to deter them from the reality. The notion of "mandates" fitted comfortably enough into the prevalent ideology of imperialism.

We always do profess to hold the territory which we seize, as a "sacred trust," much as we defend the taking of native land and the imposition of direct taxation by our passion to teach them "the dignity of labor." Great care was taken, however, to omit from the settlement every detail which might have led to an honest interpretation of the idea. The British Labor party, for example, had proposed that the whole of tropical Africa, and not merely the former German colonies, should be placed under the League of Nations. We hoped in this way to bring the Belgian, the Portuguese and the French colonies, worse governed by far from the native's standpoint than the German possessions, under the supervision of the League. That would have ended also our own recent policy of monopoly in the tropical vegetable oils, and also the odious French schemes for the military conscription of the natives. It was a part too of our plan that the mandated areas should be subject to searching and continuous inspection by officers of the League. More important, however, even than these details was our proposal that the League of Nations should be, above all things, an economic structure. We proposed to continue in peace for the benefit of all the world, the rationing of raw materials which the Allies had improvised during war. If the coal, the iron, the oil, the cotton, the wool, and the phosphates and the grain had been distributed under international control from the first day of the armistice onward, the Continent would have escaped the dearth which seems today to doom its civilization. The League could have governed by dispensing these necessary things, nor would any problem have arisen in regard to the oil of Mosul or the phosphates of Nauru. They would have been distributed in proportions fixed by a standing council of the League. None of these conditions commended themselves to the Allies. The power of a critical opposition disappeared in the hour of triumph, and the "mandates" served only as a disguise to cover the fact of annexation.

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Could disinterested government of backward peoples be attained, if these conditions were observed? Where a civil service has a high tradition of duty and honor, as in British West Africa it certainly has, the thing is not impossible. The scandals of African colonization have never been due to the spontaneous vices of any civil service, British, French or German. They begin only when the interested views of the settler, the planter, the trader and the concessionaire have overborne or corrupted the administrator. The daring idea which the British Labor party originally put forward (to modify it later), that direct government of Tropical Africa might be confided to the League of Nations, has been dismissed much too lightly by the man of the world as Utopian. Short of this solution there is no final cure for the rivalry of empires. In no other way can we hope to discard once for all the tradition that a colony is an estate and a possession, which some white nation, or its ruling class, keeps for its own use to the exclusion of others. It implies, needless to say, a League of Nations which has won an assured position of authority for itself. It might work ill, moreover, unless the League had its democratic assembly, in which a vigilant opposition would conduct a probing scrutiny into the doings of its officials. The crux of this problem is really the question whether an international civil service can be created. Every national service has a tradition of its own, more or less fixed by temperament, history and education. All of us are familiar with the Anglo-Indian mentality, a habit of thought which begins to be formed in a young man while he is still a student at college. One is inclined to think at first sight of an international service, as a corps which would necessarily lack traditions or personality or character. Worse still, could the men of many nations who formed it, contrive to reconcile their many national conceptions of conduct, morals, personal rights and the natives' status, so as to form a corps capable of cohesion, discipline, and united action? If one imagines the amalgamation of the existing services in the tropics, and the haphazard recruiting of new aspirants, the result would certainly be chaos.

The key to this problem is education. There is just one international body in the world which has solved it, and it is the Catholic Church. The Society of Jesus has never in all its many enterprises, educational, missionary, administrative and diplomatic, failed to blend its novices into a solid phalanx. Its failures and errors have never been due to nationalist friction or racial incompatibility. Its success in blending men of all nationalities has been due to a common system of education. In its schools and colleges it created a Jesuit mind, which with all its failings and its qualities, superseded what was particularist and provincial in the original national character of its novices. The tale is dim and half-forgotten today of the Jesuit Communist State in Paraguay. Few of us could recall any account of it, save in the jesting pages of Candide. The balance of evidence is, however, that for a century and a half the Fathers promoted the welfare of a big native population with a disinterestedness and a success unique in the history of the dealings of white men with colored men. The records show that these fathers who converted and educated these big communist settlements, taught them to build up a thriving agricultural life, and gave to all their labors the spirit of song and festival and religious joy, were men of all races, Germans, Dutch, Irish and Poles as well as Spaniards and Italians. One may judge this fascinating experiment as one will, but it proves at least that if a common education can create an international civil service, that same achievement need not be beyond the capacity of the League of Nations.

The first step would be to create a college or colleges endowed by the League. One might be founded at Cairo for African studies, and another at Constantinople or Damascus for Oriental needs. The teaching staff must itself be international, and should include experienced practical administrators, as well as the ablest scholars, historians, economists and anthropologists drawn from the universities of all Europe and America. The students would be young men and women of all nations who feel the attraction of this career, Swedes, Germans, Americans and Russians, as well as Englishmen and Frenchmen. They would spend some years together in close touch with the native life of Cairo and Damascus. They would learn their Arabic at the ancient University of El Azhar, where one may see the faithful of all Africa, black, tawny and white, at their rhythmic prayers. If there were among the professors even a few who had magnetism and imagination, a common mind, a common tradition based on love for these simple peoples and an ambition of social service would grow up among the students. It should be understood that the graduates, without regard to nationality, should be drafted to serve in British, French, Belgian, or Portuguese colonies and mandated areas, as vacancies arose. At the end of a generation or less, the process of internationalization would be completed, and all tropical Africa might be transferred without a wrench or a perceptible disturbance to the direct government of the League. From this same college, backward oriental states like Persia might draw the administrative assistance they required.

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Is it childlike in view of the ugly reality to pursue these Utopian dreams? One wearies of the negative, cynical attack. It is too easy to demonstrate the crude acquisitive motive at work in Mesopotamia or Nauru. How should we who loathe imperialism and believe in the ideal of the League solve the problem of Mesopotamia and its oil? The instinct which carries the conqueror there is not wholly immoral. The world needs this source of power and heat and light. Civilization is going under in Europe for lack of coal or its substitute, oil. The sparse tribes of half-nomad Arabs and Kurds who live around Mosul can have no right to deny its resources to the rest of mankind. But it is equally clear, if we start from this premise, that the victor who happens to have given himself a "mandate" for this territory, has also no right in morals to monopolize the product. It is easy to say that the oil should be assigned on an equitable percentage basis to the various peoples who need it. That principle can hardly be applied, however, unless it be generalized. Only if an international commission of the League of Nations had the right to control all the exportable surpluses of the world's oil-fields, could a rationing system be applied to the yield of Mesopotamia. As things are, this question has been settled by a rough rule of grab by the two chief European victors. Mosul, in point of fact, fell under the secret treaties to France. Their neatly colored maps showed it plainly in the French sphere. It was our troops, who acquired it, however, and hold it, and our Foreign Office was able to produce a concession granted by the Turks on the eve of the war. If the French insisted on taking the territory, we should none the less claim the whole of the oil. The result, after hot and angry debates in the chamber, is that we keep the territory and seventy-five per cent of the oil. The remaining twenty-five per cent goes to France. The needs of other allies and neutrals were apparently not considered, and the concessions held by German companies fell to us as the spoils of victory.

So far, however, we have only touched the fringe of this problem of property. The phosphates of Nauru are to be worked as a government monopoly. There is in the scheme for distributing the yield, a bafflingly naive national egoism. But no private interest gains. The British and colonial farmer will get his fertilizer at or about cost price. The same government which believes in nationalizing phosphates, scouts the idea of treating the oil of Mesopotamia on a similar plan. Even if the deposits belong to the state, the commercial exploitation of the oil will fall to one of the big existing syndicates. The tax-payer at home will bear the cost of the big garrison which occupies Mesopotamia. The French revenue will be charged with the cost of the army which secures the pipe-line from Mosul to a Syrian port. The syndicate, relieved from these first charges, will make its profits on the oil. Conquest does not "pay," if one regards it as a national enterprise, but most assuredly, it pays from the standpoint of "big business."

If a labor government had been in power, it would have found in this question of Mosul the test of its morals and its statesmanship. Its first task would have been to appeal to the intelligence of the people of Mesopotamia, so that the development of the oil-field could have been arranged without a garrison of 70,000 men to enforce it, and without those aeroplane patrols, which scour the desert and drop their bombs when they see human movement below them. It would have wanted much patience and tact. But suppose we could have said with complete honesty: "The profits of this piece of work which we propose to do in Mosul, shall all of them remain in the country. Year by year they will constitute a fund which shall be used entirely for your benefit. With them we will build houses to replace your miserable huts. With them we will pay teachers for your children and doctors for your sick. Your fields shall be irrigated. Your flocks and herds shall be bred from improved stocks. And since life is more than bread and meat, we aim at something more. We will create in Bagdad, with the profits of this oil, a great Mohammedan university. We will bring back the glories of the Caliphs, and restore the culture and the wealth that made of Bagdad one of the glorious cities of civilization. The oil we shall sell at a low price to the whole world that needs it. Our engineers shall receive adequate salaries. But the entire profits of the enterprise belong to the people of Mesopotamia. Appoint your council to watch our work. Name your expert auditors to see that we keep our word to you. But leave us unmolested to do a great work for you, for Islam, for God's glory and for the whole of civilization." William Penn with a much less advanced population made a success of a much less attractive scheme than this. I cherish the belief that a big man, a man of magnetism and evident honesty, could carry it through without so much as an aeroplane to back him.

But these are fancies. Our capitalist imperialism works on other lines. It has seized the oil. The profits will go to a syndicate of financiers. Mosul will be dragooned by air-men and Lancers at the cost of the submissive taxpayer. The world will laugh at our cynicism, and in Bagdad no Arab renaissance will flower again.

H. N. Brailsford.

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Fiction is Stranger Than Truth

SINCE inevitable, or even probable, fiction has always seemed to me impossible, it is gratifying for me to announce the discovery of a basic law which will utterly vanquish the theory that fiction, beginning with the Impossible, evolved through the Possible to the Probable, and is now in the stage of the Inevitable. This law (which I presume will be known to posterity as Hastings' Law), expresses the correlation of the salability (or readability) of a work of fiction and the probability of the story. The correlation is inverse, that is, the less the probability the greater the salability.

Compound mathematical probability is expressed by fractions; thus the probability that the next man you meet on the street was born on the 29th of February is 1/365 x 1/4 = 1/1460.

The way to solve an inverse ratio is to invert the fraction. If a novel is wholly probable, the probability is 1/1, and the inverted fraction is still 1/1, or 1. Therefore the salability—or in this case readability—of such a novel is 1, that is the author. A probability of 1/2 means a readability of 2—the author and his wife. Further decrease of probability would take in relatives and friends. The point of publishability is reached when the probability declines to about 1/2000. Granting the probability of the shop girl marrying the millionaire to be 1/100,000, the sale of a novel built on such incident should be 100,000 copies.

For a detailed demonstration of Hastings' Law, I select Harold Bell Wright's marvellously readable and highly moral-purpose work entitled: The Re-creation of Brian Kent.

Probability of character is incommensurate; moreover, in fairness to the author, we should leave some vestige of his role as an artist—so necessary to his social conquests. Hence we consider incidents only.

First incident: Our hero, Brian Kent, robs a Chicago bank, and, having spent the loot, regrets it. He is drinking whiskey and contemplating suicide. Auntie Sue, a silver-haired and golden-hearted re-creator, is living with Judy, whose spine and soul are both awry, on the banks of an Arkansas river. There are some fifty railroads out of Chicago and a thousand odd stations on each road. But the Ozarks are better adapted for hiding than Dakota, where fleeing fugitives can be seen for twenty miles. We therefore assume but 3,000 towns as shuffling in the hat of Fate with the particular town on Auntie's river. That means a probability of 1/3000 and publication assured for Harold Bell.

Being a hero, Brian cannot disgrace himself by drowning in shallow water, hence steals a boat, and then, in a farewell spree, becomes too drunk to jump overboard. But the boat drifts 40 miles without sail and rudder. Just above the death howl of the roaring rapids the Unseen Hand of Destiny gets hold of the keel and with gentle but certain touch beaches the John-boat on the little sand-bar before the cottage. It would require a hydrographic chart of the stream to be entirely scientific here say, conservatively, 1/200. The cumulative probability is now 1/3000 x 1/200 = 1/600,000. But the publisher knew more was coming for he struck 750,000 copies at the first printing.

The chance of Brian crossing the bar before a ramming log or rising current took off the boat we place at 1/5, and Judy discovers the boat, the sleeper wakes, and the re-creation is begun.

Now for a high denominator incident. Auntie Sue had sent some Brazilian bank notes for deposit to the very bank that Brian robbed. Confer bank statistics as to Auntie Sue's range of choice and mark down 1/8000.

The Brazilian notes arrived on the very day for Brian to add them to his gleanings on the eve of his flight. He had been stealing pretty generally, but it was a big bank, so we give him 1/100 for that particular catch.

Things now move out of character and environment for a space. Under the radiance of Auntie's soul and Ozark sunsets, the bank clerk begins to write the great Arkansas novel; for which the public, surfeited with Greenwich Village tainted literature, is athirst.

It is written. But alas, publishers' readers taboo script, and Judy cannot type. Of the million stenographers in the U. S. A., Auntie Sue knows only one, and sends to Cincinnati for her. This only stenographer is the doted niece of the president of the bank that Brian robbed—and said president was one of Auntie's old pupils. This is a complication, and after much slide rule work, I arrive at 1/30,000.

Death, at Fate's behest, now smites the brother in South America (who sent the bank notes) so that the black-bordered envelope arrives and reveals to Brian that he has robbed his re-creator.

Brian's character accounts for despair, and having no whiskey to circumvent an effort to drown himself, he tries instead to drown the manuscript. Judy appears in the nick of time and fishes the manuscript out of the river—remember the roar of the rapids—and just then the stenographer from Cincinnati appears, neatly timed to the day of death and the minute of fishing. Life insurance statistics give us the probability of the brother's death on the necessary day as about 1/5000. As for the minute

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timing, there are about 600 minutes in daylight hours, or 1/600.

The next vital incident is that Brian's faithless wife with her nefarious paramour come suddenly out of the world's vast wickedness to occupy the summer lodge across the river. She, believing her husband to be dead, chooses this neighborhood either by Fate driven or Chance directed; but, as the Ozarks are well-advertised for vacation purposes, we will score 1/100 for the regional choice and 1/500 for the lodge across the river.

The wife's leisure-surfeited lover comes to buy eggs on the very day after Judy, enraged with jealousy, has told her moonshine father of the award awaiting in Chicago for the apprehension of the fugitive, and then, coming back and confessing to Auntie Sue her unkind deed, causes Auntie to take the midnight Ozark Limited to Chicago, leaving the good lovers unchaperoned so that the bad egg buying paramour reports the find of a "love-nest," and Judy, conveniently showing up at the kitchen of the club-house reveals the identity of the husband to the wife,—no really great improbabilities in all this, but several little ones, about so: 1/10 x 80 x 20 x 20.

Inevitability now takes the bit in its teeth and plunges headlong down and on to the tragic suicide of the drunken wife in the roaring, death boiling rapids. The hero, hesitating until she is safely lost, dramatically tries to save her. Her life goes out within his arms—credit Infinite Wisdom, too strong for mundane mathematics. We are now at the finale; 1/100 we allow to express the probability of a Chicago bank president discovering a hitherto unheralded literary genius; and again Inevitability sweeps us, like flotsam in the raging torrent.

Now we gather our results: multiplying the denominators (omitting ciphers), we have: 3 x 2 x 5 x 8 x 1 x 3 x 5 x 6 x 1 x 5 x 1 x 8 x 2 x 2 x 1 = 3,456,000.

We go back and count our ciphers, add them to above and have: 345,600,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000.

Stated in less figurative English, there is one chance in three hundred and forty-five billion and six hundred millions of thousands of millions of millions of billions that The Re-creation of Brian Kent might be a true story. Have I proved too much? Not at all. The figure indicates the scientifically possible sale of Harold's latest. The present limitation of the earth's population is a purely adventitious factor. The truth of mathematics is co-existent with the sidereal cosmos; inter-planetary communication is on the way; there are worlds without end for literary Alexanders to conquer.

MILO HASTINGS.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Esch-Cummins Bill

SIR: "The Congressmen and Senators who voted so cheerfully for the Esch-Cummins Railway legislation," says the New Republic in your issue of May 26th, "undoubtedly supposed that for a few years at least they were setting the railway problem at rest."

If they did "undoubtedly suppose" such an agreeable result, they concealed their optimism effectively. On the Labor provisions, for example, "the Senate conferees yielded simply to supreme necessity," according to Senator Cummins, "for we all recognized that a railroad bill must be passed before March 1st, or chaos would ensue. All that I can say of them (the Labor provisions) is that they are the best we could devise under the conditions which confronted us" (59 Cong. Rec. 3500). The debate by other members shows an even clearer comprehension of the transitoriness of the "settlement."

This initial error of fact in your discussion is less trivial than it might appear, because it indicates your lack of comprehension of the true nature of the Esch-Cummins law. It is not a solution, but a preparation, and the real question which you ought to be discussing is the *next move* on the railroad chessboard, and how the working out of the Esch-Cummins law clears the ground for it.

But to return to what you do discuss:

"It is an easy fallacy to blame the law for the breakdown, merely because the breakdown happened to come a few months after the law was signed." Correct, it is an easy fallacy. "But if it should appear that the transportation system has broken down in precisely those aspects in which critics of the Esch-Cummins bill foretold that it would break down, if a diagnosis today exactly verifies their prognosis of three months ago, *it will be hard to escape the conclusion that the Esch-Cummins law is to blame.*" This sounds like playing house with logic. Because an eclipse of the moon follows a Democratic victory at the polls, it does not follow that it was caused by the election, you say, *unless some Republican predicted the eclipse before the election,* in which case it would be "hard to escape the conclusion" post hoc, propter hoc.

The plain fact is that most well-informed persons, both critics and proponents of the Esch-Cummins bill, predicted some such breakdown, whether the Esch-Cummins bill or the Plumb plan, or any other bill, or no law at all, were enacted, chiefly for reasons not connected with the legislation at all. To confine attention merely to the three points discussed in your editorial:

First, the car shortage. "There was a shortage of rolling stock, even under federal control" you say. This of course is the fundamental cause of the present car shortage, and it made the present situation (and other crises to follow) inevitable. You say that private competitive control intensifies the difficulty. This may or may not be true; the point is that the *mere existence* of the shortage does not prove the shortage worse than it would have been under federal control, so that you cannot claim your prediction to have been verified by the event.

Second, the Esch-Cummins bill, as you predicted, has not restored the credit of the railroads. Granted; but this poor credit of the railroads is not the cause of this breakdown, nor do you apparently contend that it is. The failure to restore credit is beside the point.

"On the third point the critics of the law have scored

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even more heavily." The outlaw strikes, you say, were due not entirely to dissatisfaction with the undemocratic organization of the Railway Brotherhoods, discontent aroused by profiteering in other industries, and unrest engendered by the war, but also to the fact that "railway workers, and particularly the underpaid, unskilled workers in yards and repair shops, are entitled to a substantial wage increase." Curiously enough these are not the employees who went on strike,—unless you mean by "unskilled workers" the yard brakemen and trainmen, who have never heretofore considered themselves or been considered, unskilled.

The outlaw strike is due primarily, as you say, to the flaunting of the railroad workers' demands for increased wages; but this flaunting of their demands is *not* due to the Esch-Cummins bill as you state. One wonders how it could ever reasonably be considered to be so. Certainly the fact that the stockholders receive a six months guarantee (which you so often complain of) is not the reason that wages are not advanced, as you seem to imply. The difficulty lies in the fact that last summer wages were too low and (if you will), the return to capital too high. The preservation of this status quo is the source of complaint, and the preservation of the status quo was inherent to the pendency of *any* legislation, the Plumb plan included. Opposition to the Esch-Cummins bill necessarily tended to prolong this status. The Esch-Cummins bill, when passed, provided a reasonably expeditious method of adjusting wages in the future. Existing wages were guaranteed against reduction; no one, either in the Brotherhoods or out, proposed that existing wages be advanced by legislative fiat in the bill.

Why, then, this persistent quarrel with the Esch-Cummins bill? Granted that "the real fault lies with Congress and that Congress should have given the President and the Director-General of Railroads a mandate to increase wages when they asked for it last summer," how do you figure that the fault lies with the Esch-Cummins bill? It sounds doctrinaire. It sounds like the usual attempts to blame the ills of mankind on Democratic (or Republican, as the case may be) inefficiency.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. A. S. OLMSTED.

[Since the armistice was signed, there have been two alternative policies which Congress could pursue in dealing with the railroad problem. The first was the McAdoo-Hines policy, of extending federal control for a few years, and thus enabling the government during that period to work out the intricate and pressing problems of finance, organization, and labor which war had thrust upon us. The second was the Esch-Cummins policy, of turning the roads back to their owners at once, under a system of modified but impotent governmental regulation. Congress chose the second, and rejected the first, in the face of repeated warning that such a policy meant traffic paralysis, and grave labor disturbance. If federal control had been retained until the railroads could be permanently reorganized and placed on a sound footing, the Railroad Administration could have averted the car shortage by placing orders for equipment a year and a half ago; it could have met the labor crisis by granting justifiable wage demands before the situation became desperate; and it could have economized railway equipment by continuing its policy of unified operation. Under the Esch-Cummins policy it could do none of these things. The car shortage has grown infinitely worse, railway credit has remained precarious, and labor unrest has grown month by month more ominous. At the very least these facts seem to us to throw upon the friends of the Esch-Cummins law the burden of establishing a respectable alibi. With full appreciation of Mr. Olmsted's point about the moon and the Democratic party, it seems to us that he has not been very successful.

With his admission that the Esch-Cummins law is not a "solution" of the railroad problem we heartily agree, but to say that it is a "preparation" for the next move is surely an optimistic delusion. If it was a preparation, it must have been a preparation for something. But for what? What is the next step that the Esch-Cummins law renders more easy? Or was Congress simply preparing, without knowing what for? The Esch-Cummins law was not a preparation, but a mere desperate compromise, without a thought as to what it would lead to, and instead of making the next step easier, it seems to us to have made it infinitely more difficult. THE EDITORS.]

The Paper Shortage

SIR: The shortage of printing paper is the result not so much of the exhaustion of our natural supply of pulpwood but of the treatment meted out to the producers of pulpwood by the paper mills. The Department of Forestry at Washington as well as the corresponding officials of our states report still large areas of woodland available for pulpwood. It is only a comparatively narrow strip of land, running parallel to our railroads, about three miles wide on either side, and the banks of our navigable rivers which are cleared of trees suitable for pulpwood.

In discussing the paper problem, only two parties, the manufacturer and the big consumer of paper, are recognized. The third, but really vital factor, namely, the producer of the raw material out of which paper is made, is not even mentioned. The question at present is not so much how to secure a cheaper supply of pulpwood but rather how to find a permanently sufficient source.

As late as the spring of 1916, the paper mills paid for a so-called cord of pulpwood, F. O. B. shipping point, $5.53. Such a cord, if I am not misinformed, is in the state of New York the legal cord of wood, 8 by 4 by 4 feet, farther south the paper mills demand 160 cubic feet, a pile 8 by 5 by 4, and in Virginia, I am told, the pulpwood measures 8 by 6 by 4 feet, or 192 cubic feet. Such an increase of the length of each piece of pulpwood is very hard on the man who has to make and handle it; it also reduces the distance for which such a cord of wood can be hauled over country roads very considerably.

The price of $5.53 left the owner of the pine trees which were cut down for pulpwood no profit. He had to pay $2 for having a cord made and, if he lived farther than three miles from his shipping point, $3 for having it hauled to the station. Besides, he had to hire help to load his pulpwood into the freight car. Under these circumstances, as a rule, only very poor people could think of shipping pulpwood, most of them back-to-the-landers whose capital had proved too small for properly developing their farm. Confronted by the choice of leaving the farm and losing their entire investment or earning a little money by making and selling pulpwood, they chose the second alternative and worked for the paper mill practically for nothing. For the price set for their pulpwood by the purchaser was not only very low, but they had also to submit to a system of being docked by the paper mill.

A friend of mine was asked at the time mentioned to

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sign a contract by which he would bind himself to furnish 1,500 cords of pulpwood to a paper mill at $5.53 a cord. He went to some business men in a nearby city to find out whether he could borrow on the strength of that contract the sum of $1,000 which was to enable him to tackle the 1,500 cords. His advisers warned him that the margin of profit was dangerously small and that, on account of the European war, the cost of labor might rise at any moment. He had sense enough to return the contract unsigned.

After our country joined the Allies, the price of pulpwood went up rapidly. If I remember rightly, for a short while as much as $16 was paid for a cord. But then the pulpwood makers demanded and received from $5 to $5.50 for a cord, and the cost of hauling etc. had risen proportionately. Moreover, the paper mills did not seem very anxious to obtain pulpwood. For they submitted cheerfully to long and frequent embargoes on pulpwood shipments.

Until our country entered the war and again since hostilities ceased, the pulpwood districts were and are allotted to different paper mills so as to avoid competitive buying. A given paper mill is the proprietary lord of its district and is represented by a local representative who is said to receive $1 for each cord of pulpwood which is shipped from his district to his mill. As the mills specialize, one company will claim and control all the pine wood in a given district whereas another company is granted the possession of all hardwood, such as poplar, gum, etc. The price paid for hardwood is fixed at a dollar more than that of pine. During the war, the representative of the hardwood people would buy also some pine; but no other party ever invaded the district here referred to.

At present, the price offered for a cord of 160 cubic feet of pulpwood is $14. The purchasers claim that price will leave the seller of pulpwood a clear profit of $4 per cord. They are careful to omit, however, the cost of loading the pulpwood on the car, which amounts, at least, to $1 per cord. Thus the promised profit has to be reduced at once to $3.

But even the other figures, estimating the cost of making and hauling, are fictitious and express rather the desire of the paper mills to bring down the cost of labor than the prevailing state of the labor market. Labor in the country is so scarce and the work of making pulpwood so hard that it is impossible to secure men for that job at $4 per cord. My friend, attracted by the apparently high price offered for pulpwood, tried for weeks to hire pulpwood makers at $4 a cord. He did not obtain a single one. The men claimed they could not live on $4 a cord. There are indeed a few exceptionally strong and skillful men who are able to make a cord of pulpwood per day. They are a kind of local heroes. But they have to work from sunrise to sunset. The great majority of men succeed only in making half a cord per day. They as a rule work with a partner. A man working alone cannot count on turning out half a cord of pulpwood every day. That men, working in the woods all day long, cannot support their families on $2 per work day, is self-evident. If a man has to buy his food at a country store, he pays necessarily higher prices than are paid in the city. All the pulpwood makers interviewed by my friend demanded $5 a cord and more. One gang of four men agreed to work for $4 a cord, provided they would be given a contract for 1,000 cords. That was more than my friend could tie up in pulpwood.

In such cases, the paper mill is willing indeed to advance the money for making the wood. They will send around on payday one of their own men to pay the laborers for the wood they made at the rate of $4 per cord. Of course, they expect the party on whose property the pulpwood is made at the expense of the company to get busy at once and ship every month approximately as much wood as is made. The company, being run on business principles, has to charge interest for the use of their money by the man who furnishes them pulpwood. The obnoxious word interest, however, is not mentioned. They only say: If we advance the wages of the pulpwood makers, we can pay you only at the rate of $13 per cord instead of $14. If that is figured out as interest, they charge for $4 advanced $1 interest, which is 25 per cent a year.

There is one more point to be considered. The paper mill does not pay for pulpwood as it is measured and paid for in the woods, hauled to the station and loaded on the car by the producer. It insists on paying according to its own measurement taken at the mill. A man told me he shipped a carload of 14 cords but was paid only for 11 cords by the mill. They claimed to have found only 11 cords of pulpwood in the car. Pulpwood, by the way, is shipped in boxcars which are sealed as soon as loaded. Inquiries confirmed that such a system of docking is the rule in the pulpwood trade. The shipper to protest against it might go to the mill, claim his carload of pulpwood, hire men to reload it, ship it back, pay the freight, and take it again to his farm.

Representatives of the paper mill explain the difference between seller's and buyer's measure as the result of the severe shaking the pulpwood receives while in the hands of the railroad. Another man was more honest. He claimed pulpwood, while seasoning in the woods, lost one-twelfth of its volume. Therefore, it was but just and proper that the mill should pay for thirteen cords received, only the price of twelve cords. For they could not afford to stand the loss of one cord in every twelve. The trouble is that the pulpwood producer has to pay for green wood.

When my friend had learned all these facts, he came to the conclusion it was not in his power to fight the scarcity of printing paper. For his bill of expenses, without any unforeseen accidents, reads as follows:

Making a cord of pulpwood	$5.00
Hauling it from woods to road	1.50
Hauling it by truck to station	6.00
Loading it on car	1.00
Total expenses per cord	$13.50

Therefore, a carload, consisting of thirteen cords, would cost him $175.50. For that carload he would receive not more, perhaps even less, than 12 times $14, or $168.

If our paper mills could make up their minds to treat the owner of pulpwood as they compel their customers to treat them, there would be no scarcity of paper. It is easy enough to ascertain the cost of raising pulpwood. That includes, of course, the cost of the land on which it grows, the taxes paid for the same, labor to improve the growth of pulpwood trees as well as interest on the money invested. Suppose the farmer was allowed 6 per cent interest on his investment and dealt with fairly, he would undoubtedly prefer to leave his poorer land covered with scrub pine instead of clearing it for agricultural purposes. For the latter choice requires an immense amount of labor and a large capital without promising immediate returns. A regular income from his woods would enable him to employ the whole year around a number of good workers who would help him during the farming season to raise better and more abundant crops. WILLIAM WEBER.

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Charles Sorley

The Letters of Charles Sorley. New York: Cambridge University Press.

AS John Masefield considered Sorley the most promising of the English poets killed in the war, these letters of his come highly recommended. One approaches them prepared to find little beyond promise—a hint of something fine cut down before fulfillment; they turn out to be very much more than mere promise; they are in themselves achievement, the expression of a rarely independent mind, humorous, rich and wise far beyond its years. For though Sorley died when only a few months over twenty, in reading these letters there is no need to discount his age. Indeed the average run of life's critics are rather childish by comparison with his detached judgment—and at the same time their chief cause for envy should be his spontaneous youth.

The letters written from school are interesting, but the real quality of Sorley's mind begins to be apparent when he leaves England to live and study in Germany. It delights him from the beginning, and he writes: "I have a kind of feeling that . . . I left Egypt and arrived safely in Canaan." Naturally he cannot help making sharp comparisons between Canaan and Egypt. Of the Herr Doktor Ministerialsekretär in whose house he lives he says: "If he was English he might be a bounder, but being a German he is perfectly delightful." He watches the German officers playing hockey "in their Sunday clothes —boiled shirts, butterflies and spats. They have not yet hit the ball, but are still trying. Now isn't that delightful? Catch a beastly English officer making a public donkey of himself!" And after a few weeks of such hearty unself-conscious German life he cannot but think with pain of his own education. "Give me," he cries, "your German day school that makes them so earnest and lemon-faced and pincenezed and unashamed of the pursuit of learning: and not the public school that makes one self-conscious, ashamed of knowledge, always seeking to impress."

From such quotations it is plain that if Sorley's eyes were very much open to England's faults, Germany was far from casting a spell over him. With him the attempt to see things as they are was so natural a function that the boredom or enthusiasm of the moment never interfered with it. Though he liked Germany, from the start he had no illusions about either the place or the people. He soon learned "to keep clear of the corps students with beery wounded faces," soon found out that "every Prussian is a bigot or a braggart"; and after seeing Berlin he "will allow it to be called the capital of Prussia—but of Germany, NO . . . ." The scenery, the architecture, he keeps at an affectionate distance: "I am so delighted by Weimar that I imagine Zion is going to be a rather over-decorated Weimar." Germany reminds him again and again of the Odyssey—which "could not be read in better surroundings, for the whole tone of the book is so thoroughly German and domestic."

Sorley can find "an unfailing gymnastic pleasure in speaking . . . . their fine shaggy language," and be at the same time quite alive to its limitations. "In modern German poetry," he notes, "the language is massively beautiful, the thought is rich and sleek, the air that of the inside of a church." ". . . . The Germans have good beer and poetry, but their prose is cobwebby stuff." He is no more impressed by the giants of foreign literature, qua giants, than by English ones. "Rotters like Swinburne and Tennyson" he naturally despises. And even of his god of the moment, the prophet who succeeds Masefield and Hardy in his affections, he remains calm enough to say: "If Goethe really died saying 'more light,' it was very silly of him: what he wanted was more warmth." In such criticism there is evident no perverse dislike of orthodoxy, no impulse to demolish idols simply because they are enthroned, but a simple desire and keen ability to pierce the haze of centuries of opinion and appraise the "great man" at his naked face-to-face value. "Browning has . . . . a hearty bounding incorrigible optimism which must be very comforting to Christians. He was always content with second-best." And when Rupert Brooke holds the limelight Sorley at once perceives that he was "far too obsessed with his own sacrifice."

The war breaks out while he is on a walking trip in Germany. He is locked up for a night in a cell the previous occupant of which had been shot as a spy. But his mind keeps an even keel. He notices, on his way to the border, the contrast between the shabby panic of certain American school-marms and the fatalistic calm of the train loads of Italian colonists returning home—the "silent submissive unquestioning faces of the dark uprooted Italians . . . . thin old women like wineskins, with beautiful and piercing faces, and big heavy men and tiny aged-looking children." He sees the moral issue of the war with the same untroubled gaze, borrowing not in the slightest degree the opinion of any one else in the world. "What a worm"—he exclaims—"one is under the cart-wheels—big clumsy careless lumbering cart-wheels—of public opinion. I might have been giving my mind to fight against Sloth and Stupidity: instead, I am giving my body (by a refinement of cowardice) to fight against the most enterprising nation in the world." Nevertheless, he admits he must fight. "I regard the war as one between sisters, between Martha and Mary, the efficient and intolerant against the casual and sympathetic. Each side has a virtue for which it is fighting, and each that virtue's supplementary vice . . . . But I think that tolerance is the larger virtue of the two, and efficiency must be her servant. So I am quite glad to fight this rebellious servant." But if Sorley is willing to fight, he is not at all "cheery" about it, and such a statement does not fully express his cool and complicated state of mind. Rather is the truth to be found in the sum of many apparently varying ideas: "The war . . . . has annoyed me, and it's really excellent for one to be annoyed". . . . "I still hate Grey (because he has that infernal habit of being *really* always in the right)." . . . . "We are not fighting a bully, but a bigot". . . . "For the joke of seeing an obviously just cause defeated, I hope Germany will win. It would do the world good and show that real faith is not that which says 'we *must* win for our cause is just,' but that which says 'our cause is just; therefore we can disregard defeat,' ". . . . "Why insult justice by offering it a material crown like Victory?"

After a few months of training, Sorley goes with his unit to France. He sinks deeper into himself, seems not at all excited by the nearness of the front, dreams of happier days, discovers that "people enjoy grief, the only unbearable thing is dullness," begins, after a while, to "hate our general, our C. O. and men; we do not hate the Germans . . ." "Sunk deep in denkfaulheit," he lives through long stagnating summer days, "trying to catch in the distant but incessant thunder of the upper air promise of October rainstorms."

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But with October came the final extinguishing bullet, as he led his company at the hairpin trench at Halluck. Briefly, suddenly, there was thrust upon him what he would have loathed to hear called "the supreme sacrifice." The earth claimed him: he who had confessed himself her son, who had inherited more from her than from man, and born to live among men, was above their panic blindnesses and fears. Like a tree, his roots were in the earth; the mean and various winds that drive men foolishly about made a rustle in the leaves, but could not move him. For, as he said, "the earth, even more than Christ, is the ultimate ideal of what man should strive to be." R. L.

New English Poets

Poems: First Series, by J. C. Squire; The Queen of China, and Other Poems, by Edward Shanks. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

THESE are first books, but first books that have not to make the struggle for bare recognition that is usually entailed on first volumes of verse. Mr. J. C. Squire and Mr. Edward Shanks are known in the world of letters, and their books come with a certain authority. The poets are both alike in this respect, that while they handle their themes, the one with skill and good insight, and the other with eagerness, in neither case is a new discovery shown—nothing like the discovery of a borderland as in Walter de la Mare's poetry, or of a new rhythm and a new vocabulary as in D. H. Lawrence's or of a new edge to a form such as is in the verse of a traditionalist like James Elroy Flecker. The best of Mr. Shanks's poems have a sensuousness and an eagerness that stirs a reader, while in certain of the poems in Mr. Squire's volume there is something more keen and mature.

Mr. Shanks is obviously the young poet and a great deal of work in the early pages of The Queen of China is formal. He begins to show himself as the young poet of promise in The Fireless Town, an imperfect but interesting narrative. The poem that gives title to the book, The Queen of China, has a story to tell also.

As a narrative poet he has still to learn that a story in verse should be as plausible in conduct and details as a story in prose. John Masefield could have taught him this. The Fireless Town is the story of a wizard invited to a lady's chamber by way of basket and rope, and then left hanging in mid-air, the mock of the passers-by. If I remember aright the story was told of the Master Virgil of medieval legend. It was a lady, I think, who had a lodging in Charlemagne's palace who put him in the fix. The point of the story is in the inescapable plight of the wise one. The wall is too dangerous to fall from and too steep to clamber up or down. The story as told by Mr. Shanks makes use of the well-known prerogative of enchanters—the ability to quench fire and light in a community. The trick put upon the wizard and his quenching of the fire and light of those who mocked him is the motive of The Fireless Town.

Mr. Shanks has taken the story out of the austere atmosphere in which a wizard moves and lives by making his hero a student of five and twenty. Instead of the courtiers of the medieval story we have the lads and lasses of an English village—"the pretty country folk" of Shakespeare. The fire and light quenched by the scorned Michael is given back to the town when the promise that drew him to his plight is fulfilled. The picture of a man hanging against a high and a dark wall is never made for us, and unless we get that picture—the bare outline of the medieval story gives it to us—we get neither thrill nor suspense. The whole atmosphere of the poem is that of a village, and the low-roofed houses of a village keep in our mind.

The poet tells us in the beginning that the merchants of this particular town—

> . . . built great halls of yellow stone
> And set tall windowed gables thereupon.

But in spite of that announcement we get no sense of height to the houses. It is said of the heroine of the tale—

> Though all men praised, her father praised her more
> Because he slept at night with unlocked door,
> Unshuttered windows and a heart at rest,
> While all his fellows at the inn confessed
> That bars and bolts must keep their daughters in
> And roving dishonor from the anxious kin.

Village houses are in those unshuttered windows and unlocked doors and we cannot help saying to the lover who is left suspended, Why not jump out of the basket? Yet in spite of the lack of plausibility Mr. Shanks has put something fresh into the story. His other narrative, The Queen of China, shows a more mature handling than The Fireless Town. It is in dramatic form, or at least it goes in dialogue. No attempt is made to create a Chinese China—the story passes in a China that might appear in a sixteenth century European tale; it is like a slow-moving pageant, and the verse has a grave charm. Had The Fireless Town and The Queen of China with another of the longer poems Fête Gallante, come out as a smaller book it would be easy to praise it as a most promising first volume.

The romance that Mr. Shanks is so fain of is hardly for his senior fellow. However, such romance is revealed for once in The Lily of Malud, where the dark-skinned maids—

> With ecstatic terror dumb, steal fawn-like through the shades
> To watch, hour by hour, the unfolding of the flower.

The poem has well-wrought pictures—the girls stealing to the edge of the forest, the lily opening in the glade, the girls back from their vigil—

> And when those maidens rise they are as they ever were
> Save only for a rare shade of trouble in their eyes.
> And the surly thick-lipped men, as they sit about their huts
> Making drums out of guts, grunting gruffly now and then,
> Carving sticks of ivory, stretching shields of wrinkled skin,
> Smoothing sinister and thin squatting gods of ebony,
> Chip and grunt and do not see.

This alien poem is the only one of its kind in the collection. Mr. Squire likes to make his poems about a chair by the fire, about the roof of a house that pigeons light upon, about trees, about hills. A characteristic poem of his is the one we come on first in the book—

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IN A CHAIR

The room is full of the peace of night,
The small flames murmur and flicker and sway,
Within me is neither shadow, nor light,
Nor night, nor twilight, nor dawn, nor day.

For the brain strives not to the goal of thought,
And the limbs lie wearied, and all desire
Sleeps for a while, and I am naught
But a pair of eyes that gaze at a fire.

He can write with such friendliness of the objective world, because as he tells us in Antinomies in a Railway Station he possesses the knowledge—

That all things change yet nothing changes,
That all things move yet all are still.

And for him—

Even in peopled streets at times
A metaphysic arm is thrust
Through the partitioning fabric thin,
And tears away the darkening pall
Cast by the bright phenomenal.

"The bright phenomenal" is here and is given validity because of the knowledge of what is behind the "partitioning fabric thin." Not all the poems have this objectivity; two, The Fugitive and The March are poignant. Perhaps the poem of his that we will keep most distinctly in the memory is the one in which he names the world's rivers in a long roll—"cold Ebro, and blue racing Guadiana," "The Volga that turns his back upon Europe," "Isar, son of the Alpine snows." In this poem he gives us a reverie through which flows a fresh and cool romance.

PADRAIC COLUM.

This Simian World

This Simian World, by Clarence Day, Jr. Illustrations by the author. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

ISN'T there some fairy tale,—if not, there ought to be—wherein a guest is invited to dance with a masked figure who, by gay and grotesque steps, leads the way to a terrace overlooking the world. Here the dancer slowly removes his mask and is at last revealed as a kind of sage or seer who discourses wisely concerning the mysteries that lie before him. Mr. Day, in this little book, does just this thing. It ought to interest any lively spirit because of its grace and reasonableness. And it ought to entrap and enlighten any slack soul who may pick it up in search for amusement. Amusing it unquestionably is, but a great deal more than amusing, to follow this grim parallel between the ways of apes and men. If the effort strikes us, in our simplicity, as piquant and novel, that is because people are usually unconscious of family resemblances. Riding to hounds, delighting in trapeze performances, chattering through telephones, devising encyclopedias and newspapers to satisfy curiosity,—all these show too plainly whose cousins we are.

Mr. Day piles one clinching instance upon another. As we read him, we seem to feel in our long disused muscles that ancestral thrill of the dizzy leap from tree to tree. We flush with secret knowledge of the lost joy of hanging head downward by the tail. Our ears twitch in response to cadences of our forgotten arboreal language. Tribal loyalty begins to stir. Almost with jealous reluctance we follow the tracing of possibilities latent in other races, our co-heirs on this planet. Like the poet of "all sad words" this tolerant philosopher seems to sigh as he imagines the Might-have-been if the ants, tigers or some such early rivals had won the race and acquired the throne. Our Simian civilization shrivels into relative unworthiness as he points out how much more industrious, chaste and unselfish would have been a world dominated by a superior race developed from ants or bees, how much cleaner and quieter than ours would have been a feline civilization. All those not Simian by conviction, joining the author's meditation, could shed with him a few tears for those worlds of dream that rest only on "ifs." Yet Mr. Day is too much of a realist to continue for long these backward and wistful glances. He faces facts and strides forward. Confronting a world undeniably Simian, he usefully suggests paths toward further development that we may follow without violence to our ape-like nature. The curiosity that we share with our anthropoidal relatives should for example be made use of in educational method, the Simian desire for babbling in assemblies should be utilized in governmental devices, industry should be forced to reckon with the inherited play instincts of the laborer.

It is not until he nears the end of his argument that Mr. Day unmasks completely. And when he does so, he speaks in accents that can only proceed from flashes of true vision. When he turns his eyes upon our spiritual possibilities, having faced all our follies, his voice is most worth listening to. He has been speaking again of our valuable heritage, curiosity. Yet "we who crave so much to know, crave so little but knowing. Some of us wish to know Nature most; these are the scientists. Others, the saints and philosophers, wish to know God. Both are alike in their hearts, yes, in spite of their quarrels. Both seek to assuage, to no end, the old Simian thirst.

"If we wanted to *be Gods*—but ah, can we grasp that ambition?"

In that last sentence the unmasked dancer on the terrace gazes toward—and sees—the horizon.

R. T.

Mrs. Gladstone

Mrs. Gladstone, by Mary Drew. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

PIETAS is one of the most admirable virtues; but it has a tendency to destroy perspective and is as much a warning, as an example. Mrs. Gladstone was for nearly seventy years an admirable mother and a perfect wife. She shared in the political controversies of her husband and took no small part in sustaining him in the burden of his struggle. Inevitably the importance of Mr. Gladstone's career brought many persons of distinction within the ambit of her acquaintance. Her daughter was desirous of leaving some record of her personality, and this book is the outcome. It is very amusing and at times full of unintended revelation. It shows Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone as the perfect examples of the Victorian household—in intimate relations with God, full of bustling kindness to their servants, and insistently charitable to the poor. But it is a little difficult for the outsider to know why three hundred pages were necessary to paint what must at best be a purely negative picture. One is glad to learn that Mrs. Gladstone loved her sister. It is admirable to know

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that she got on well with all her relations. Life would have been less easy if her method of climbing stairs had remained undiscovered. The student of literature will find that Lord Tennyson wrote the briefest of epistles in reply to dinner invitations. The great world becomes very like a macrocosm of the little world. Mrs. Gladstone goes to hear her husband speak in the House of Commons in the same eager anxiety that the wife of a state governor hears him make his inaugural address. She is as thrilled in meeting Sir Robert Peel as Mrs. Jones of Red Gap is doubtless thrilled in meeting the President of the United States. It all doubtless satisfies family pride. But it wastes good paper at a time when that substance is only less rare—than gold.

H. J. L.

Creative Chemistry, by Edwin E. Slosson. New York: The Century Co.

IN Slosson's charming book, Creative Chemistry, the romance of modern chemistry in all its glory is unfolded before us. Explosives and fertilizers, coal tar and perfumes, sugar and rubber, corn and cotton, the electric furnace and radium—all are described in attractive, non-technical language. Read the book if only to know a little bit about the world in which we live. Read it, for truly the information you will find in this book is of more immediate concern to you than many of the dispatches from Washington which you peruse ever so patiently.

Slosson, an editor of the Independent, and one-time instructor of chemistry and dabbler in acylhalogenamine derivatives, is one of those rare mortals who can really talk chemistry to you and make you understand him even though your scientific up-bringing blinds you to any sharp distinctions between elements, compounds and mixtures. And he does this in a very simple way. He uses the method employed by the skilful teacher: he appeals to your experiences. For example, to speak of argon as one of the inert gases of the atmosphere—a phrase to which most text-books of chemistry faithfully adhere—would but confuse the average reader; whereupon Slosson discusses the element under the heading of one of the "celibate" gases of the atmosphere. Again, speaking of the nitrifying action of the bacteria in the soil, he informs his readers that "soil society is as complex and specialized as that above ground; and the tiniest bacterium would die rather than violate the union rules. One set of bacteria changes the ammonia over to nitrites and then a third set, the Amalgamated Union of Nitrate Workers, steps in and completes the process."

Just one more reference to the many human touches in this work. Teachers of chemistry have the greatest difficulty in conveying ideas on the subject of catalysis to freshmen classes. A catalytic agent, say the orthodox text-books, is one which accelerates (and sometimes retards) a chemical reaction without itself undergoing a permanent change. Slosson immediately brings forth similes which mean something to the layman—and this book is meant for the man without any chemical knowledge. A catalyst, he tells us, is really a "chemical parson," or, if you will, "a good mixer." With this in mind the reader can begin to grasp the functions of the catalysts in the body—the "enzymes"—which bring about the various changes that food material undergoes in our system.

B. H.

The Story of a New Zealand River. By Jane Manders. New York: John Lane Co.

THE spiritual struggle that makes up the major theme of The Story of a New Zealand River defeats its own purpose by its meticulous regard for endless analysis. It was evidently Jane Manders' conviction (doggedly adhered to) that by elaborating every incident and bringing to the fore every facet of a complex situation that extends over a number of years the interest of the reader would be heightened and better retained. Instead of this, the reader becomes wearied.

The theme of this book is good but it is not good enough for 430 pages of closely printed matter. Even the sense of reality that the author has undoubtedly captured and the consistency of her character-drawing become tiresome after a time. A novel that moved more readily, that had been shaken down to lesser space, would have proved more compelling.

Of the characters that create The Story of a New Zealand River, which, by the way, is an extremely bad title, nothing but praise may be given. They display an inordinate amount of careful study of human nature, moving and thinking with the absolute reality of rounded figures.

The central idea itself is excellent. Alice Roland, gentle, super-refined, quite Victorian in her mental attitudes, finds the primitive uncouthness of her settlement home in New Zealand hardly reassuring or conducive to happiness. She instinctively revolts against the bareness of things, the lack of comforts, the free and easy life. Proud and distant where men are concerned she is especially so toward David Bruce, who happens to be the only cultured man at the lumber-camp.

Immediately this is postulated the reader knows that a love affair is imminent between the two. So the triangle begins, Tom Roland, the husband, crude and unthinking; Alice, the wife, gentle and absurdly conservative, and David, apparently the only normal person of the three. Those same conventions loom greatly in Alice's mind and although love is acknowledged that is as far as it goes.

With the growth of her daughter, Asia, a new and entirely alien mental outlook is forced upon Alice. Asia goes to the man she loves although he is married, and goes without any hesitation. That her child should do this while for years she has crushed her passion within her is a source of torture for Alice. Her spiritual viewpoint has bound and gagged her all her life; it has denied her happiness.

Only in the sunset of life after her husband is providentially killed in an accident does Alice go to David. Two great attitudes toward a mighty problem are presented here and it may be inferred that the author approves of Asia's choice.

The great care expended upon the character-drawing of Alice Roland is remarkable. Stroke after careful stroke completes a personage not especially complex but yet difficult of full portraiture. One hardly feels sympathetic toward her; she arouses impatience but she must be pitied. David Bruce, except that he is somewhat idealized and suggestive of the stage hero at times, is consistently developed and Tom Roland, who also is heroized a bit at the end, is painted with due regard for his complexities. But it is Asia that the reader remembers; she is the sanest and simplest of them all.

H. S. G.

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Responsibility, by James E. Agate. New York: George H. Doran Company.

THIS story is the rambling, discursive, autobiographical record of a young man thrown into an environment of sordid commercialism which he cordially detests. Decidedly the most effective character is the young man's uncle, a rascally old pharisee who reckons confidently upon a profitable balance sheet in this world and the next. The old gentleman belongs to a dissenting chapel, where he occasionally preaches in the absence of the minister. Here are excerpts from his homilies:

"Since we are without information as to the Good Samaritan's means we cannot judge of his degree of generosity.

"Since we are not told whether the widow's rent was paid we cannot be sure that the mite was hers to give.

"No man has the right to be generous at the expense of his creditors. Even the disciple must cut his coat according to his cloth.

" 'And they straightway left their nets, and followed him.' "

"The morality of this proceeding depends upon the fisherman having no business engagements."

Somehow this seems to overdraw the picture. The peculiarly unlovely type of commercial puritan who feels a moral urge to amass wealth at the expense of his neighbors usually keeps his business and his religion in separate compartments. In fact he is inclined to condemn as sacrilegious any attempt to interpret Christ in terms of modern society. But the cheating, lying, sanctimonious uncle stands head and shoulders above the other characters. He seems to be a product of sincere hatred, which is often a valuable aid to artistic creation.

The author, in his insufferable introduction, says:

"Illegitimacy's my theme, the slur of illegitimacy—oh, not the slur on the child, that old stumbling-block which has defrayed the tears of the servants' hall since servants learned to read, but the slur on the father. And yet not slur—I am to stress the essential difference between that fatherhood which is wilful and that which is careless, between the fulfillment of great purpose and meaningless gratification."

This is an extremely imperfect and inaccurate forecast of the plot. The hero's love affair is treated in a very superficial and episodic fashion. He meets a girl and tires of her quickly; she is scarcely as large a factor in his life as several conceited and self-sufficient young friends, with whom he likes to exchange views about literature and philosophy and human existence. He loses all trace of Clare; and only sees his son when the latter is a grown man. Then the problem of involuntary fatherhood is mellowed and simplified by the introduction of the war, which comes clattering on the stage towards the end of the book. Father and son regard each other through asperity in their relations. The son enlists; and Mr. Agate brings his work to a close with a fine burst of sentimentality about the fathers of England and their sacrifices. W. H. C.

Contributors

H. N. Brailsford, the English publicist, is the author of The War of Steel and Gold and Across the Blockade.

Babette Deutsch is a writer of essays and verse. In A Superb Ironist she describes lithographs which she saw some two years ago.

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